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A HISTORY OF ZOROASTRIANISM

LEIDEN/KÖLN
E. J. BRILL
1982

A HISTORY OF ZOROASTRIANISM

BY

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Professor of Iranian Studies
in the University of London

VOLUME TWO

UNDER THE ACHAEMENIANS

LEIDEN/KÖLN
E. J. BRILL
1982

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Dedicated
to my friend

MARGARET INVER SCOTT

in gratitude

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FOREWORD

The period of Zoroastrian history which is the subject of the present volume has long been studied in the West, beginning with the publication by B. Brisson in 1590 of his learned *De regio Persarum principatu libri tres*, which went through several editions. Thereafter the passages in Greek and Latin works which are the principle sources for knowledge of Achaemenian religion were sifted through again and again, and in time their testimony was amplified by acquaintance with the cuneiform inscriptions of the Achaemenian kings. Yet despite the existence of these contemporary records no consensus of scholarly opinion was achieved over one crucial matter, namely whether or not the early Achaemenians were Zoroastrians. That the later kings of the dynasty were adherents of the faith was never in serious doubt, for Greek testimony on this point is reasonably clear; but with regard to Cyrus the Great, Darius the Great, and Darius' immediate successors, controversy raged.

The main reasons for uncertainty in the matter were as follows: Zoroastrian tradition is wholly silent about Cyrus, not preserving even his name; the inscriptions of Darius and his successors, though containing matter consonant with Zoroaster's teachings, do not mention the prophet himself; and nor does Herodotus in his account of Persian religion, which moreover describes observances which do not accord with Zoroastrian priestly practice as known from the Pahlavi books; and finally, a date for Zoroaster was given in Persian records of the Sasanian and post-Sasanian periods which made the prophet a contemporary of Cyrus, so that it was difficult to see how his teachings, promulgated among the eastern Iranians, could already have reached that western Iranian king.

Yet the Greeks, interested observers of the Persians from the sixth century onwards, recorded no change of faith among them during the Achaemenian period, and knew their priests, the famed magi, as the followers of Zoroaster, a seer assigned by them to remote antiquity. In the light of such conflicting data, scholarly opinion swung to and fro; and it is only in the last decades that decisive evidence has emerged to show that the whole Achaemenian dynasty was indeed Zoroastrian. Thus archaeologists excavating at Pasargadae in the 1960's found there the first 'fire altars' of Zoroastrian type, dating from the time of Cyrus himself; and others working at Persepolis produced detailed studies of

the iconography of the royal tombs, showing thereby an unbroken continuity of beliefs from the time of Darius the Great down to that of Darius III. Researches by scholars working on Judaism and on early Greek philosophy suggested that Zoroastrian influence began to be exerted on the cultures of the Near East as early as the sixth century; and studies by Orientalists destroyed the credibility of the date which had assigned Zoroaster himself to that epoch. Finally, better knowledge of the actual beliefs and observances of Zoroastrians showed that Herodotus' account of Persian religion in the mid fifth century was actually in accord with orthodox lay Zoroastrian practices.

The welcome consequence of these advances in knowledge is that a historian of Achaemenian religion is no longer obliged to spend time initially in weighing numerous inconclusive arguments, but can devote his energies entirely to marshalling and seeking to interpret the mass of erratically preserved data which survives for the period. Much of this comes from non-Iranian areas in the western satrapies, notably Asia Minor, Babylonia, Israel and Egypt; and it has grown steadily in recent decades. As a result, enough is now known about Zoroastrianism under the Achaemenians for it to be clear that this was a very important period for the development of the faith. It was also the time when, as the religion of a great empire, Zoroastrianism exerted its widest influence, notably upon the Jews, contributing thus to shaping the beliefs and hopes of a large part of mankind. Accordingly I am very grateful to Professor Spuler and the house of Brill for allowing me to devote to this epoch a whole volume of the present history.

In preparing the volume I have once more been much indebted to friends and colleagues who have given me help and advice; notably to Professor W. G. Lambert, who very kindly spared time to read two drafts of part of Chapter Two (concerning contacts with Mesopotamia in the pre-Achaemenian period), which he subjected to meticulous and valuable criticism; to Professor Norman Cohn, who allowed me to profit from reading in draft parts of his own forthcoming book on millennial expectations in antiquity, as these affected Zoroastrian and Jewish contacts; to Dr. Peter Calmeyer and his wife, Dr. Ursula Seidl, for their readiness to discuss archaeological problems, and for providing me most generously with offprints and references; to Professor David Stronach likewise for illuminating discussions of archaeological matters; and as before to Dr. A. Shahbazi for his continual helpfulness in keeping me informed of his own and other scholars' discoveries. I have benefited greatly from discussions on archaeological and philological questions with

my colleagues Dr. A. D. H. Bivar and Dr. N. Sims-Williams; and from the unstinted help over bibliographical matters given me by my friend Dr. M. I. Scott of the University Library, Cambridge, to whom this volume is gratefully dedicated. I am also indebted to Mr. W. Pittard for particular aid with Russian publications.

This second volume takes one into a different world from the first, linguistically as well as chronologically and geographically; and with certain forms the aim has been to achieve uniformity of usage within it rather than in harmony with the first one. Thus, for example, Old Persian 'Ahuramazda' is regularly used instead of Gathic 'Ahura Mazdā', Younger Avesta 'Anra Mainyu' instaed of Gathic 'Angra Mainyu'; and niceties of transcription such as 'ə' and 'ŋ' have generally been abandoned for 'e' and 'n'. For simplicity's sake length-marks have not been placed over the vowels of well-known words such as 'Gatha' or 'Daeva' in the text, although these are consistently used in the index.

It remains for me to thank the house of Brill for their courtesy and patience, and for the technical skill that has gone into the production of this volume.

ABBREVIATIONS

AAH	Acta Antiqua Academiae Scientiarum Hnngaricae
Ab.	Abhandlungen
Afo	Archiv für Orientforschung
AJSL	American Journal of Semitic Languages and Literatures
AMI	Archaeologische Mitteilungen aus Iran
ArOr	Archiv Orientální
Av.	Avestan
AVN	Ardā Virāz Nāmag (Pahlavi text)
BiOr	Bibliotheca Orientalis
BSOAS	Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies, London
BTA	Anklesaria, Behramgore Tehmuras
CAH	Cambridge Ancient History
Comm. Cyrus	Commémoration Cyrus, Acta Iranica Vols. 1-3
CRAIBL	Comptes rendus de l'Académie des Inscriptions et Belles-lettres
DAFI	Cahiers de la délégation archéologique française en Iran
DB	Inscription of Darius the Great at Behistun
Dd.	Dādestān i dīnīg (Pahlavi text)
ERE	Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics, ed. J. Hastings, 13 vols., Edinburgh 1908-1926
EW	East and West
F.-P.	W. S. Fox and R. E. K. Pemberton (see bibliography under W. S. Fox)
GBd.	Greater Bundahišn (see bibliography under B.T. Anklesaria)
GIP	Grundriss der iranischen Philologie, herausgegeben von W. Geiger und E. Kuhn, 2 vols., Strassburg 1895-1904
Gk	Greek
HZ I	The first volume of the present history, published in 1975
IIJ	Indo-Iranian Journal
Ind.Bd.	Indian Bundahišn (see bibliography under E. W. West)
Iran.Ant.	Iranica Antiqua
IsMEO	Istituto Italiano per il Medio ed Estremo Oriente
JA	Journal asiatique
JAOS	Journal of the American Oriental Society
JCOI	Journal of the K. R. Cama Oriental Institute
JdI	Jahrbuch des deutschen archäologischen Instituts
JHS	Journal of Hellenic Studies
JNES	Journal of Near Eastern Studies
JRAS	Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society
KZ	Zeitschrift für vergleichende Sprachforschung auf dem Gebiete der Indogermanischen Sprachen, begründet von A. Kuhn
LAR	D. D. Luckenbill, Ancient Records of Assyria (see bibliography)
Mem. Vol.	Memorial Volume
MKh.	Mēnōg i Khrad (Pahlavi text)
Mon.	Monumentum
MIr.	Middle Iranian
MP	Middle Persian
NC	Numismatic Chronicle
NP	New Persian
OnP	Onomastica Persepolitana (see bibliography under M. Mayrhofer)
OP	Old Persian
Pahl.	Pahlavi
PFT	Persepolis Fortification Tablets (see bibliography under R. T. Hallock)
PTT	Persepolis Treasury Tablets (see bibliography under G. G. Cameron)
RA	Revue d'Assyriologie et d'Archéologie orientale

RHR	Revue de l'Histoire des Religions
RT	Ritual Texts (see bibliography under R. Bowman)
SAA	South Asian Archaeology 1977 (see bibliography under M. Taddei)
Sb.	Sitzungsberichte
SBE	Sacred Books of the East, ed. F. Max Müller
SbPAW	Sitzungsberichte der Preussischen Akademie der Wissenschaften
ŠGV	Škand-gumānīg Vizār (Pahlavi text)
Survey	A Survey of Persian Art, 1st, ed., 6 vols., cited by volume number (see further in bibliography under A. U. Pope)
TPS	Transactions of the Philological Society, London
Vd	Vendidad
Y	Yasna
Yt	Yašt
Zādspram	Vizidagihā ī Zādspram (see bibliography under B. T. Anklesaria)
ZDMG	Zeitschrift der deutschen morgenländischen Gesellschaft

(Note: For abbreviated titles of books see under the author's or editor's name in the select bibliography at the end of the volume. For editions of those entries noted as 'Pahlavi text' see the first volume of this history.)

CHAPTER ONE

THE BACKGROUND

Retrospect: the date of Zoroaster

In the first volume of this history evidence was assembled which suggested that Zoroaster had lived in the turbulent times of the Iranian Heroic Age, when his people were one of numerous Iranian tribes inhabiting the South Russian steppes. This period coincided broadly with the Iranian Bronze Age, held to extend from about 1700-1000 B.C. Further reflection has led the writer to conclude that Zoroaster's own tribe must have been one which during this epoch still maintained a largely Stone-Age culture, at least during the prophet's formative years; for there is no suggestion in his Gathas that he himself recognised the existence of the characteristic tripartite society of the Bronze Age, with its division into herdsmen, priests and warriors [1]—the last-named being the chariot-riders (*rathaēštar-*) of the Younger Avesta, who were the 'heroes', devoting themselves to the pursuit of glory through fighting and raiding, hunting and drinking deep in rivalry with their peers.

The society which emerges from the Gathas as the one which the prophet himself knew has an older, more stable pattern, that of a bipartite society with only the broad divisions of warrior-herdsmen and priests; [2] a pastoral society which looked upon itself as 'the collectivity of men and cattle together',[3] *pasu vīra* in the Avestan phrase, with every lay man expected to bear his part in caring for and protecting the herds; a society moreover which was ruled by laws formulated by its wise men, the priests, and which had no marked distinctions of rank among its members, since all men still went on foot about their daily affairs, and all could equip themselves, at expense only of skill and labour, with what weapons they needed—clubs and slingstones, stone-tipped arrows and spears, stone knives and axes. Every grown lay man was a 'warrior', every 'warrior' at some time a 'herdsman'.[4]

[1] See Boyce, Zoroastrians, 24; and in more detail 'The bipartite society of the ancient Iranians', Festschrift I. M. Diakonoff, ed. M. A. Dandamaev et al., London, in press. The characteristically lucid study by E. Benveniste, 'Les classes sociales dans la tradition avestique', JA 1932, 117-34, is admirable in so far as it treats of the Younger Avesta, but its findings in relation to the Gathas do not bear scrutiny. In his articles Benveniste confined his analysis of a tripartite society strictly to the Indo-Iranians.

[2] I.e. *vāstrya* and *nar* are synonyms, see Boyce, art. cit.

[3] B. Lincoln, 'Indo-Iranian *gautra', J. of Indo-European Studies III, 1975, 161-71.

[4] This is to speak of course in broad generalisation, overlooking such special groups as, e.g., minstrels and story-tellers.

This traditional society, in which the high priest would have had his leading role in the council of elders,[5] and in which accepted laws would have been generally observed, evidently suffered assault in the prophet's own lifetime from tribes which had already acquired bronze weaponry and had learnt to make regular use of the horse-drawn chariot. In such tribes a division was bound to develop between the herdsman, whose life was still bound up with his slow-moving cattle, and the mobile chariot-riding warrior, who no longer accepted his share of such tribal duties, and who was apt to seek wealth and fame for himself elsewhere, often with some noted warrior-chief.[6] In Zoroaster's own terminology these ruthless and acquisitive men were *afšuyantō* 'non-herdsmen' (Y 49.4); and they are not likely to have had much regard for the laws which he himself upheld so ardently,[7] preferring 'the rule of tyrants and deceit rather than truth' (Y 32.12), and worshipping doubtless the Daevas, gods of war, rather than the ever-just Ahuras. So the tribal council gave place generally to the arbitrary rule of warrior-princes, and right yielded reluctantly to might.

It was this pattern of a violently changing society, and the relative helplessness of his own people amid the turbulence and brutality of the Iranian Heroic Age,[8] which, it seems, made of Zoroaster 'the first apocalypt',[9] a prophet who called in the perfect equity of a future time to redress the evils of his own day.

[5] On the leading role of the priest in ancient Indo-European and Indo-Iranian society see E. Benveniste, Le vocabulaire des institutions indo-européennes, II 9-15. On rule by councils of elders, which in general preceded the military rule of a Heroic Age, see H. M. Chadwick, The Heroic Age, Ch. 17.

[6] The general analysis of heroic ages given by Chadwick, op. cit., 348 ff., is shown by the Avestan yašts and the Persian Shahname (see HZ I 105 ff.) to be applicable also to Iran.

[7] The importance of law for the prophet, exemplified by the recurrent use of legal terms and imagery in the Gathas, is rightly stressed by S. Insler, The Gathas, 182 et passim. [This important translation of Zoroaster's great hymns by a Vedic scholar appeared simultaneously with HZ I. It is a mine of philological learning, and treats admirably many problems of vocabulary and syntax. There are also numerous illuminating ad hoc observations, such as that just cited; but unfortunately the author freed himself to concentrate mainly on philological problems by deliberately ignoring Zoroastrian tradition as exemplified in the Younger Avesta and the Pahlavi literature, and in the living faith. This he justified by reverting to the position adopted by Martin Haug in the mid 19th century (see Boyce, Zoroastrians, 202 ff.) that this tradition represents a radical distortion of the prophet's own teachings. These teachings Haug, like Insler after him, understood to be a pure and noble theism with little in the way of distinctive doctrines and unsupported by observances. Such an interpretation was understandable in Haug's day; but it is puzzling that it should now be adopted again, anachronistic as it is, when so much careful work has since been done by other Gathic scholars to disprove it. See the remarks on p. 89 of his review-article by H.-P. Schmidt, 'Old and new perspectives in the study of the Gathas of Zarathustra', IIJ XXI, 1979, 83-115.]

[8] On the lawlessness and viciousness of heroic ages in general, as they affected ordinary members of society, see with a wealth of illustration Chadwick, op. cit., passim, but especially Ch. 16, 19.

[9] J. Duchesne-Guillemin, The Hymns of Zarathustra (transl. M. Henning), London 1952, 18. For parallel backgrounds to other, later gospels of hope see N. Cohn, 'Medieval Millenarism ...', in Millenial Dreams in Action, ed. S. L. Thrupp, The Hague 1962, 31-43.

These considerations do not make it possible to fix Zoroaster's date with any greater precision, since the use of bronze presumably spread as erratically among the Iranians as iron is known to have done thereafter; but one fact seems certain, which is that Zoroaster must have lived before the time of the great migrations, when wave upon wave of Iranians, led one must presume by well-armed warrior bands, moved southward off the steppes to conquer and settle in the land now called Iran; probably, that is, before 1200 B.C.[10]

Doctrinal consequences of this dating

In Zoroastrian tradition the great divinity Khšathra Vairya, 'Desirable Dominion', is the protector of warriors, that is, it appears, originally of men in general. He is also lord of the sky; and his divine partner, Spenta Ārmaiti, is guardian of the lowly earth, and protectress of women. In the words of an ancient text: 'This earth then we worship, her who bears us, together with women'.[11] (Priests, the repositories of wisdom and learning, saw themselves, it seems, as having an especial relationship with Ahuramazda himself, the Lord of Wisdom, who if they were worthy filled them with his Holy Spirit, Spenta Mainyu). The antithesis of 'Khšathra—sky—dominion—men' and 'Ārmaiti—earth—devotion—women' was striking, and the symbolism could be richly developed. In the case of Khšathra and men there was even a tangible link, since according to ancient belief the sky was made of stone. So the warrior-herdsmen of Zoroaster's own people, being armed with stone, protected themselves and defended the right with the substance of the 'creation' over which Khšathra ruled.[12]

It was this last aspect of the doctrine concerning Khšathra which must early have created problems for Zoroastrian scholar-priests, for the development of bronze and iron weaponry threatened this physical association. Teachings concerning the great Ameša Spentas were of primary importance in the faith; and much thought must have been devoted to this problem before a solution was found, which was to identify the 'stone' of the sky as translucent rock-crystal (a solution which may in due course have influenced Greek thought about the crystal spheres). Rock-crystal was then classified as a metal, presumably

[10] This is only one of several considerations which make it impossible for the writer to accept the thesis, learnedly argued once again by Gh. Gnoli in his Time and Homeland, that eastern Iran was the scene of Zoroaster's own ministry. Gnoli himself holds the date of the prophet to have been towards the end of the second or the beginning of the first millennium B.C.

[11] Y 38.1.

[12] On these matters see HZ I 132-3, 207 ff., modified in Boyce, Zoroastrians, 24.

because it was found in veins of rock, like metallic ores; and so Khšathra could be venerated as lord of a metallic sky, and hence the link was kept between the guardian of warriors and the weapons in their hands. An additional element in the priestly thinking by which this solution was achieved was probably that in the Gathas Khšathra appears in connection with the 'last things' and hence with the final ordeal by molten metal.

Another complexity arose when after the settlement of Iran the distinction gradually became even sharper between the 'herdsmen', turned predominantly farmers in their new abodes, and the 'warriors', now established as a landed gentry; and it came evidently to be felt unfitting that the former should look to the same divine protector as their betters. So in the end, as humble tillers of the soil, they were assigned to the guardianship of Ārmaiti, sharing this with women.[13] The old symbolic relationship of sky and earth, man and woman, thus became obscured for a more complex society, and sophistication began to cast its shadows over the clarity of Zoroaster's teachings, and the grandeur of his vision of the human lot.

The preservation of the faith

Nevertheless, despite this and other developments of the Achaemenian period and thereafter, his community was to remain faithful to Zoroaster's essential teachings, as these are to be discerned in the Gathas, for some thirty centuries—down, that is, to modern times. That this could be so is undoubtedly due not only to the power and coherence of these teachings, but also to the fact that Zoroaster, himself a priest, gave his followers simple, impressive, repetitive observances to maintain: the daily 'kusti' prayers to be said by each, and the seven yearly feasts to bring every local community together fraternally. These observances imprinted his doctrines on their minds; and these doctrines, themselves positive and hopeful, were ones which could give a purpose and cosmic significance even to humble acts of daily life. Zoroastrianism is a religion which demands to be thoroughly lived; and, being so lived, it could be transmitted faithfully from one generation to the next, upheld, it is true, by a hereditary priesthood, one of the most conservative in the world, but very much the trust and possession also of each individual believer. Its ability to survive, not only without any support from a secular power, but in spite of hostility and active persecution, has been demonstrated

[13] See HZ I 206-7 with n. 66 (where this development was mistakenly attributed to an archaic period).

accordingly in more than one land and epoch during later periods of its long history.

The western Iranians in the settlement period

In the previous volume an attempt was made to gather together the slender evidence for the spread of Zoroastrianism among the eastern Iranians, perhaps largely after they had invaded the territories now named after them. The Medes and Persians settled far to the west of them in lands along the inner face of the Zagros, the formidable mountain-range which divides the Iranian plateau from the Mesopotamian plains. Zoroastrianism evidently reached these two peoples long after it had become the dominant faith of their eastern cousins, for its holy texts, making up the Avesta, belong essentially to the latter group.[14]

The lands which the Iranians entered, probably between 1200 and 1000 B.C., were not the bare plains of today, but were covered (except where there were high mountains or barren deserts) by 'Zagrosian forest', that is, large deciduous trees, scattered thinly enough for the ground between them 'to take on the character of a grassy and herbaceous steppe'.[15] Ancient trade-routes, presumably no more than beaten trails, traversed this forest, the one best known to history being that later termed the 'Khorasan Highway'. This led up from Mesopotamia over the Zagros Mountains and across the Mahi Dasht (the plain now dominated by Kermanshah). Thence it passed eastward, skirting the northern edge of the great central desert, and coming eventually to lands occupied by the eastern Iranians.[16] One theory of the Iranians' migration has been that they were led through Central Asia by the Medes and Persians, who then pressed on westward along the line of this trail until checked by the barrier of the Zagros.[17] Linguistic affinities between Old Persian and Sogdian are among the arguments advanced in support of this theory. Against it, it has been urged that the Medes and Persians are not likely to have left behind them fertile lands in eastern Iran, and to have pushed westwards with their goods and herds through unknown forest-country, risking continually possible ambush and attack, until they

[14] This is a point which seems to be overlooked by Gnoli, op. cit., 199 ff., when, having argued that all Mazda-worshippers were necessarily followers of Zoroaster, he is forced to assume that the Medes and Persians were 'partly or wholly' adherents of the prophet 'right from the beginnings of their history'.

[15] H. Bobek, Cambridge History of Iran (ed. W. B. Fisher) I, 1968, 285 and ff. On the forest animals of the first millennium see S. Bökönyi, 'On the animal remains at Tepe Nush-i Jan', Iran XVI, 1978, 24-8.

[16] On prehistoric trade along this route see E. Porada, Ancient Iran, 19.

[17] For some of the literature see HZ I 15-6.

found they could go no further. An alternate theory has therefore been strongly argued, that the invasion of Iran was a two-pronged affair down both sides of the Caspian, with the Medes and Persians moving independently south through the Caucasus.[18]

Whichever theory is right, it seems likely that the eastern and western Iranians lost contact with one another for a number of generations after they entered their new lands. The Zagrosian regions were only thinly inhabited, and the Medes and Persians found room to settle there with their herds among the older populations. Archaeologists have traced their presence as a new people who still used bronze weapons and tools, with only a little iron, and who buried their dead in cemeteries, instead of beneath their houses. The main centres of Median settlement appear to have been the Mahi Dasht and, to the east of it, the Hamadan plain. Some Persian tribes (to judge from Assyrian records) settled among them; but the main body of Persians moved further south into the Elamite kingdom of Anshan—the region which came to be called after them Parsa (Greek Persis, the modern Iranian province of Fars).[19]

Both Medes and Persians evidently continued for generations to live a semi-nomadic life, and as late as the fifth century B.C. Herodotus records that four of the main Persian tribes were still 'wandering herdsmen'.[20] Archaeologists think that they have identified several Median sites of the ninth to the seventh centuries B.C.: notably Godin Tepe, in a gap in the hills to the west of Mt. Alvand (through which the Khorasan Highway probably then passed);[21] Baba Jan, in a fertile valley in the Kermanshah region;[22] and Tepe Nush-i Jan, to the south of Hamadan.[23] Further east, the presence of Iranian invaders has been detected at Sialk, to the south of Kashan—an ancient centre of habitation on another prehistoric trail-way, running from north to south.[24] In general, these Median settlements seem to have consisted of a fort, or fortified manor-

[18] This theory was long upheld by R. Ghirshman, for whose final re-statement of it see his L'Iran et la Migration des Indo-Aryens, 46 ff. On the whole question of the movements of the Indo-Iranians see again subsequently J. Harmatta, 'Migrations of the Indo-Iranian tribes', AAH XXVI, 1978, 185-94.

[19] On the much-discussed movements of the Persians see, with bibliography, R. M. Boehmer, 'Zur Lage von Parsua im 9. Jahrhundert vor Christus', Berliner Jahrbuch f. Vor- und Frühgeschichte 5, 1965, 187-98; D. Stronach, 'Achaemenid Village I at Susa and the Persian migration to Fars', Iraq XXXVI, 1974, 239-48, and Pasargadae, 283-4; J. Hansman, 'An Achaemenian Stronghold', Mon. Nyberg III, Acta Iranica 6, 1975, 289-311.

[20] I.125.

[21] For a bibliography of the excavation reports see T. Cuyler Young, Iran VI, 1973, 131 n. 5; and on the chronology, his article with H. Weiss, Iran XII, 1974, 209-10.

[22] For a bibliography see Clare Goff, Iran XVI, 1978, 29 n. 1.

[23] For a bibliography see D. Stronach and M. Roaf, Iran XVI, 1978, 1 n. 2.

[24] See R. Ghirshman, Sialk.

house, set on a hill, with a large cemetery nearby, and a village or seasonal camping-ground. The forts are presumed to be the strongholds of Median chiefs, whose tribesmen came and went with their flocks and herds according to the seasons; they were fairly roughly built, with large boulders or undressed stones for foundations, and massive, irregular, mud-brick walls.

The subjection of the western Medes by Assyria

The first entry of the western Iranians into recorded history is in 834 B.C. In that year the Assyrian king Shalmaneser III, campaigning in the Zagros, ravaged the Mahi Dasht. In his annals he records that, having exacted tribute from twenty-seven Persian chieftains, 'to the lands of . . . the Medes, the lands of Araziash and Kharkhar I descended . . . I slew their warriors, I carried off their spoil'.[25] Kharkar appears repeatedly in accounts of late Assyrian campaigns, and is thought to mark the easternmost limit of Assyrian power in the Central Zagros, asserted there by Tiglath-Pileser III (745-727).[26] Its exact location is uncertain, but it is held to have been in the central or eastern part of the Mahi Dasht—a region where Medes had settled among the local people, the Ellipi, and where, despite Assyrian domination, they continued to prosper both as pastoralists and evidently also as merchants. Their tribute to the Assyrians was largely in livestock; and as well as horses, cows and sheep they handed over numbers of camels—useful baggage-animals for the Assyrian armies which the Medes themselves presumably kept for the carrying trade.[27] That part at least of this trade was with eastern Iran, along the Khorasan Highway, is shown by the fact that they were among the Zagrosian peoples who provided Assyria with lapis lazuli, which Esarhaddon (680-669) described as the choicest product of the land of the Medes.[28] The original source of its supply must, however, have been the mountains of Badakhshan in distant Bactria.

The coming of Zoroastrianism to the west through trade

The importance of this trade for the history of Zoroastrianism is that Bactria, by then an Iranian land, is celebrated in Zoroastrian

[25] LAR I 581.

[26] See L. D. Levine, 'Geographical Studies in the Neo-Assyrian Zagros', Iran XI, 1973, 1-27; XII, 1974, 99-124. On the gradual increase of Iranian names in this area see I. M. Diakonov, Istoria Midii, Ch. 2 (summarized by R. Ghirshman, BiOr XV, 1958, 257).

[27] So König, Älteste Geschichte, 43.

[28] LAR II 540 (cf. I 768, and see Diakonov, op. cit., 196, cited by Ghirshman, Terrasses sacrées, 160-1). For the identification of Mt. Bikni of the Medes, called by Esarhaddon the 'lapis lazuli mountain', with Mt. Alvand (rather than Demavand) see Levine, Iran XII, 1974, 118-9.

tradition as an ancient centre of the faith; and it was probably along the route by which lapis was brought to the Mahi Dasht that Zoroastrianism first reached western Iran. A natural border-mart for such trade was Raga (modern Ray, just to the south of Tehran), a prehistoric settlement on the Khorasan Highway which, like Sialk, had been occupied by the Medes, who gave it its Iranian name. (This means 'slope, hillside',[29] and referred presumably in the first instance to the district round about, of prime importance to Median herdsmen.) Raga appears to have been the easternmost point of Median domination; and it was a place admirably situated for camel-caravans from east and west to unload there for the exchange of goods—hence its continued importance and prosperity in historic times. From what is known of such trading elsewhere, it can be assumed that merchants from both regions would have established caravanserais in the town, where they could store and barter their goods. So probably eastern Iranian traders, with their servants and priests, had been settled in Raga from at least the eighth century B.C. These are likely to have been the first Zoroastrians to have practised the faith in western Iranian territory; and subsequent history suggests that their beliefs and ways gradually attracted adherents among the Median inhabitants of the city, so that a community of the faithful grew up there.[30] So holy did Raga become for the western Iranians that their priests even already in Achaemenian times evolved a tradition that Zoroaster himself had been born there.[31] This they were enabled to do by the fact that an eastern region with a cognate name, Ragha, is mentioned in a scriptural text, the Vendidad.[32] This Ragha they evidently identified with their own Median city, to which they gave the epithet *zarathuštri* 'Zoroastrian',[33] declaring that it had had for its master (*ratu*) the prophet himself.[34] Despite the help of the Vendidad passage, these developments could hardly have taken place had there not in fact been a long-established Zoroastrian community in Raga, and had the Zoroastrian priests

[29] See Henning, 'Sogdian loan-words in New Persian', BSOAS X, 1939, 95; Eilers, 'Der Name Demawend', ArOr XXII, 1954, 300-1.

[30] On Raga as the first Zoroastrian mission-station in western Iran see Nyberg, Rel., 5-6, 46, 342-3, 396-7.

[31] See Pahl. Vd I.15 (with commentary by Christensen, Le première chapitre du Vd, 43-4); Zādspram (ed B. T. Anklesaria), X. 15. That the magi made this claim in Achaemenian times is shown by the fact that it had to be reconciled subsequently with the tradition that it was Atropatene (Azarbaijan) which possessed the holy places of the faith. This later tradition was clearly evolved after Alexander's conquest (when Atropatene became the chief centre of the Median magi).

[32] See Gershevitch, 'Zoroaster's own contribution', JNES XXIII, 1964, 36-7. For other places with variants of this descriptive name (Rāγ, Rāγa, Rāγān) see Eilers, loc. cit. in n.29.

[33] Y 19.18, an evidently late passage.

[34] See Gershevitch, AHM 265 with note.

of the west not in truth regarded that city as, for them, the original centre of the faith—their Rome, as it were, or Canterbury.

The establishment of a kingdom of the eastern Medes

From Raga Zoroastrianism probably spread slowly among the Median tribes, who must have had many ties in common, apart from those of blood and tradition. Their leading families presumably intermarried, their priests, the 'magi', appear to have been members of a single fraternity, and representatives of the whole scattered community may well have gathered each year at a fixed season to worship at *Bagastana (Behistun), the 'Place of the Gods', the mountain which rises dramatically by the Khorasan Highway between the Hamadan plain and the Mahi Dasht—at the heart, that is, of Median territory. Trade with the east had necessarily to pass through the hands of the 'free' Medes who inhabited the former area, before it reached their kinsmen who had become tributary to Assyria; and in the end the first Median kingdom, created, it is said, in 711 B.C.,[35] was established among the eastern Medes by a chieftain from the Mahi Dasht. He was a member, it seems, of a powerful family, the 'Daiukku', and his personal name appears to have been Hvakhšathra (Uaksatar to the Assyrians), although he was known only as 'Deioces' to the Greeks.[36] Kinsmen of his had had dealings both with the Manneans (to the north of the Mahi Dasht), and the kingdom of Urartu (roughly later Armenia, centred around Lake Van), which enjoyed considerable power from about 840 B.C. until its defeat by Sargon II (721-705). Sargon exiled one of the Daiukku family to Syria for his part in Urartian affairs;[37] and it may have been the threat of a similar fate which drove Hvakhšathra to the eastern Medes. There, it seems, he used his experience of diplomacy and leadership to bring about a confederacy of the tribes, with himself as king.[38] He established his capital at Ecbatana (modern Hamadan), and built there, according to Herodotus, a strong walled city with a stone palace and treasury, possibly on Urartian models.[39] The influences of Urartu and Assyria appear to have been much felt in the art, statecraft and administration of this Median kingdom, which evidently had considerable wealth at its disposal for the development of new urban ways.

[35] Diodorus Siculus II.32, see König, Älteste Geschichte, 24.

[36] On the names and relationships of the early Median kings see König, op. cit., 24-36. Herzfeld's attempt, Archaeological Hist. of Iran, 20, to identify their territory, Bit-Daiaukku, with the Hamadan area must be abandoned in the light of Levine's researches (see nn. 26, 28 above).

[37] See LAR II 12, 56.

[38] Herodotus I.96-8.

[39] On Herodotus' fairytale-like description of the city's walls, see Herzfeld, op. cit., 21-2.

The Persians in Anshan

To the south the Persians, having infiltrated among the Elamites with their flocks and herds, succeeded in due course in making themselves masters of the kingdom of Anshan, roughly, that appears, the northern part of the modern province of Fars. This was once, it has been argued, the heartland of the ancient Elamite civilization;[40] but its former capital, the city of Anshan (on the Marv Dasht, the plain to the north of Shiraz[41]) lay, it seems, in ruins before the Persians entered the region. It was sometime in the eighth century, it is thought, that the family of Hakhāmaniš (Achaemenes) established their rule in the land of Anshan over their fellow-Persians and the subjected Elamites; and thereafter the region came to be known also as Parsumash, or Parsa. The Achaemenians appear to have inherited many things from their Elamite predecessors; and they maintained to some extent at least their system of government, employing Elamite scribes to administer it. They also had diplomatic relations with the western Elamite kingdom, with its capital at Susa in the plains (modern Khuzistan). The rulers of this kingdom sought the aid of the warlike Persians in the seventh century against Assyrian aggression;[42] and the presence of Persians has been detected early in that century in the city of Susa itself.[43] A small but striking sign of the influence of Elamite ways on the Persians is that leading Persians adopted Elamite dress, at least (it would seem) for domestic and ceremonial wear, namely a wide-sleeved tunic falling in folds almost to the ankle. This differed strikingly from what appears to have been the general Iranian garb, which was a horseman's wear and consisted essentially of trousers and a short, close-fitting tunic.[44] This, often termed 'Median dress', it is assumed Persians still wore in the field.[45]

Redoubtable fighters although the Persians seem to have been, they

[40] See J. Hansman, 'Elamites. Achaemenians and Anshan', Iran X, 1972, 101-25; F. Vallat, 'Suse et l'Élam', Recherche sur les grandes civilisations, Mémoire n° 1, Éditions ADPF, Paris 1980.

[41] See further M. Lambert, 'Hutélutush-Insushnak et le pays d'Anzan', RA 66, 1972, 61-76; W. Sumner, 'Excavations at Tall-i Malyan, 1971-2', Iran XII, 1974, 155-80; Erica Reiner, 'The location of Anšan', RA 67, 1973, 57-62; E. Carter and M. Stolper, 'Middle Elamite Malyan', Expedition 18, 2, 1976, 33-42.

[42] See, e.g. LAR II 252.

[43] See V. Scheil, Textes élamites-anzanites, Mém. de la Délegation en Perse IX, 1907, iv.

[44] For detailed representations both of the distinctive Persian dress, and the trousered garb of other Iranians in the late 6th/early 5th century, see Walser, Völkerschaften; Hinz, Funde und Forschungen, Ch. IV and V. For references to some of the literature on the Achaemenian robe see C. G. Starr, Iran. Ant. XII, 1977, 56 n. 16. It seems reasonable to seek the origins of this garment among the Elamites, see R.Ghirshman, 'Le rôle de la civilisation élamite dans l'élaboration de celle des Perses', VIth International Congress of Iranian Art and Archaeology, 1968, Tehran 1972, I 90.

[45] See Shahbazi, Persepolis Illustrated, 24. For references to representations in the Achaemenian period of Persians (warriors and kings) fighting see Porada, 'Achaemenian Art', 87-90.

were nevertheless subjected, according to Herodotus, by the second ruler of the eastern Medes, one Khšathrita (Assyrian Kaštarita). He, succeeding to the throne in the early seventh century, 'was not content' (so the historian relates) 'to rule the Medes alone; marching against the Persians, he attacked them first, and they were the first whom he made subject to the Medes'.[46] The Persians, it seems, remained vassals of the Medes for over a hundred years, and appear to have been considerably influenced by their wealthier and more powerful kinsmen.

Medes, Scythians and the downfall of Assyria

The eighth and seventh centuries saw successive invasions of western Iran by two groups of horse-riding Iranian warriors from the northern steppes, first the Cimmerians, down the west side of the Caucasus, then the Scythians down the east.[47] The latter fought, plundered and formed shifting alliances in Urartu, the Zagros and Mesopotamia during much of the seventh century. For a time, while Esarhaddon was on the throne, Khšathrita brought about a coalition between the Medes, Manneans and Scythians against Assyria; but in 672 Esarhaddon was able to exert Assyrian power again strongly enough in the Central Zagros to impose pacts of loyalty on nine chieftains there, including Medes.[48] At another time three princes of the western Medes appealed to him for support against rivals and, receiving it, remained his tributaries.[49]

Khsathrita himself is said to have met his death fighting the Assyrians.[50] He was succeeded as king of the eastern Medes by a second Hvakhšathra, Cyaxares to the Greeks, a courageous and gifted leader, who according to Herodotus was the first to organise the Median forces 'in bands apart, the spearmen and the archers and the horsemen'.[51] In his reign the last great Assyrian king, Assurbanipal (668-627), made what appears to have been a final punitive raid against the western Medes in 659, ravaging, he claimed, seventy-five of their townships.[52] Thereafter he devoted much of his energies to subduing what remained of Assyria's old rival to the south, Elam; and between 642 and 639 he waged a series of campaigns which ended in the utter destruction of the kingdom ruled

[46] I.102 (where by error he calls the king Phraortes, see König, loc. cit. in n. 36).

[47] See with bibliography Julius Lewy, 'Kimmerier und Skythen in Vorderasien', Reallexicon der Vorgeschichte 6, Berlin 1926, 347-9; M. N. van Loon, Urartian Art, 15 ff.

[48] See D. J. Wiseman, The Vassal-treaties of Esarhaddon, London 1958 (reprint from Iraq XX, 1958); reviewed by I. Gelb, BiOr XIX, 1962, 159-62.

[49] See LAR II 540; CAH III 82.

[50] Herodotus I.102.

[51] Ibid., I.1.

[52] LAR II 854; CAH III 119.

from Susa. 'All of it' (he claimed) 'I conquered, I destroyed, I devastated, I burned with fire'.[53] The eastern kingdom of Anshan/Parsa was not attacked, but in 639 the Achaemenian Kuruš (Cyrus I) prudently sent his eldest son Arukku with gifts to the Assyrian court at Nineveh.[54]

After Assurbanipal's death Cyaxares made an alliance with Babylonia against Assyria, an alliance which presumably included rebellious western Medes. In 614, with Scythian allies, he took the city of Assur. Two years later the Medes and Babylonians together captured Nineveh, and Nimrud was seized and sacked also. The last Assyrian stronghold, Harran, fell in 610. Meantime the marauding Scythians, having shared in the triumph and booty, had begun a reign of terror which was to last twenty-eight years.[55] They established themselves, it seems, in Urartu (previously devastated by Assyria), and from there harassed the peoples round about. 'All the land' (Herodotus records) 'was wasted by reason of their violence and their pride for, besides that they exacted from each the tribute which was laid upon him, they rode about the land carrying off all men's possessions'.[56] In 590 they apparently made common cause with Alyattes of Lydia against the Medes, and war was waged for five years. This ended in the establishment of the river Halys in Asia Minor as the border between the Medes and Lydians, and most of the Scythians were at last driven back to their homelands north of the Black Sea. Urartu was incorporated into the Median possessions, together with Cappadocia.

The Median Empire and further contacts with Zoroastrian lands

Soon afterwards Cyaxares, founder thus of the Median Empire, was succeeded by his son Astyages (Ištuwegu to the Babylonians), who is said by Herodotus to have 'ruled all Asia beyond the Halys'.[57] How far in fact the Median Empire extended eastward is not known; but it seems probable that the Medes, a well-armed and warlike people, who must have learnt much from their western campaigns, would have tried to impose their authority over as long a stretch as possible of the Khorasan Highway, with its valuable trade; and the speed with which subsequently the Persian Cyrus the Great, having overthrown the Medes, was able to establish his rule over the eastern Iranians has been taken to show that some at least of their kingdoms already acknowledged Median

[53] LAR I 920.

[54] See E. F. Weidner, 'Die älteste Nachricht über das persische Königshaus', AfO VII, 1931/2, 1-7. Nothing is heard again of this prince.

[55] For this reconstruction of events, on the basis of a reconciliation of Herodotus I.104 ff. with Babylonian records, see Lewy, art. cit. in n. 47, 348-9; van Loon, op. cit., 23-5.

[56] I.106.

[57] I. 130.

suzereignty. The probability is therefore that Astyages ruled over Zoroastrian peoples. Conquests and treaties of trade and friendship are both likely to have been sealed by diplomatic marriages; and thus it is probable that at this time eastern Iranian noblewomen entered the households of western Iranian princes and lords, bringing with them their Zoroastrian faith. Certainly what had been perhaps a religion radiating only slowly from the merchant-community of Raga now began to make converts among the western Iranian nobility.

But before we consider further the conversion of the Medes and Persians to Zoroastrianism, it is necessary to survey the evidence for the nature of their former religion, since this may help not only to explain what appears to be their long resistance to the eastern faith, but also to account for some of the developments which it underwent among them after they had adopted it.

CHAPTER TWO

THE PRE-ZOROASTRIAN RELIGION OF THE MEDES AND PERSIANS

The evidence

The close parallels between the beliefs and observances of the Avestan and Vedic peoples show how strong and tenacious was the religious tradition evolved by the proto-Indo-Iranians in remote prehistory.[1] The western Iranians were equally heirs to this tradition, and so might reasonably be expected to have had the same beliefs and observances in their pre-Zoroastrian days. The difficulty has long been to gather any substantial amount of evidence to establish this as fact; but thanks largely to the work of archaeologists, there has been a considerable increase in data in recent decades. The greatest access has been in the number of theophoric names. These have been extracted in meagre quantity from Assyrian cuneiform texts of the ninth to seventh centuries B.C.; and more abundantly from Elamite cuneiform tablets at Persepolis, and from Babylonian cuneiform records and Aramaic writings. Much of this material belongs to the late sixth and first half of the fifth centuries—to a period, that is, when Zoroastrianism was evidently making strong headway in western Iran; but the tendency to maintain family traditions in name-giving makes it possible to use it, with caution, to throw light on the beliefs of previous generations.[2] A complication for its analysis, however, is the uncertainty which attends the reconstruction of Iranian names recorded by non-Iranian scribes in cuneiform scripts. Doubtful reconstructed forms are marked therefore below with an asterisk.

Some further material is provided by the Persian royal inscriptions of the sixth century, in so far as these preserve older traditions through the month-names of the calendar. Other valuable evidence has been provided by excavations of Median dwelling sites and burial grounds; and Mesopotamian texts and sculptures yield useful background data.

[1] See HZ I, passim.

[2] The fortification tablets from Persepolis have been dated to 509-494, and those from the treasury to 492-458. See R. Hallock, Persepolis Fortification Tablets, and G. G. Cameron, Persepolis Treasury Tablets. On the names in them see E. Benveniste, Titres et noms propres, 75-97; I. Gershevitch, 'Amber at Persepolis'; 'Iranian nouns and names in Elamite garb', TPS 1969, 165-200; and 'Island-Bay and the Lion', BSOAS XXXIII, 1970, 82-91. The material in these four publications was indexed, with additional matter, by M. Mayrhofer, Onomastica Persepolitana, (OnP). Add since W. Hinz, Neue Wege in Altpersischen, 105-18.

The gods

The Vedic-Avestan evidence suggests that the three moral beings venerated in Iran as the Ahuras—Ahura Mazda, Mithra and *Varuna—were a dominant group in the ancient pantheon; and that their chief task was to uphold the principle of order, truth and justice called in Avestan 'aša', in Medo-Persian 'arta'. The word 'arta' appears to be attested as the first element in two Median personal names recorded in Assyrian cuneiform of the ninth century: *Artasirar(u) and *Irtizăt(i);[3] while the actual name of the greatest of the Ahuras is held to be preserved, as *as-sa-ra ma-za-aš*, in a list of gods in a text of the eighth or seventh century.[4] In the earliest Achaemenian inscriptions of the late sixth century his name and title appear fused into one, as Ahuramazda, a usage which testifies to the devotion paid to him by the Persians, and the frequency of his invocation among them. He is also honoured through various theophoric names: *Maždakk(u) in an eighth-century Assyrian tablet,[5] and *Mazdaka in an Elamite one,[6] as well as, on other Elamite tablets, Mazdāfarnah 'Having fortune through Mazdā'[7] and Mazdādāta 'Given by Mazdā',[8] both attested also in Aramaic. The Persepolis and Aramaic texts also yield Mazdayazna, 'He whose worship is of Mazda'.[9]

No Mithra-names appear among the few Iranian ones preserved in the Assyrian records, but this Ahura is amply honoured in the Persepolitan nomenclature, his name appearing there both as 'Mithra', and in the Persian dialect form 'Miṣa'. An element of doubt attaches to some of the reconstructed forms, because of the lack of distinction between 'm' and 'v' in the Elamite texts; but among the seemingly certain ones are Mithrapāta/Miṣapāta 'Protected by Mithra', Mithrabarzana 'Exalting Mithra', and Dātamiṣa 'Given by Mithra'.[10]

The reluctance to utter the name of the third Ahura, Varuna, appears

[3] See (on these and other Iranian names in Assyrian texts) I. M. Diakonov, 'The origin of the "Old Persian" writing system . . .', W. B. Henning Mem. Vol., 111 n. 37; E. A. Grantovsky, Rannaya Istoria iranskix plemen perodney Azii, Moscow 1970 (cited by J. Duchesne-Guillemin, 'Le dieu de Cyrus', Acta Iranica 3, 1974, 11-21, passim). For a number of theophoric names in Aramaic script see R. Bowman, Aramaic Ritual Texts (RT).

[4] See with references Dandamaev, Persien, 216-7.

[5] See E. Meyer, KZ XLII, 1909, 15 ff.; R. G. Kent in Oriental Studies presented to C. E. Pavry, London 1933, 200-8.

[6] OnP 8.1020.

[7] OnP 8.1011 (?); RT no. 18:3 et pass.

[8] OnP 8.1018; RT no. 54:2, 21:2 (?).

[9] OnP 8.1004, 1013. On this name see Benveniste, 'Le terme iranien Mazdayasna', BSOAS XXXIII, 1970, 5-9.

[10] OnP 8.1138 and 1168, 1171, 321 (cf. RT no. 1:4 et pass.). For Mithra-names more generally see R. Schmitt, 'Die theophoren Eigennamen mit altiranisch *Miθra', Études mithriaques, Acta Iranica 17, 1978, 395-455.

among the western Iranians as among their eastern cousins. One way by which the Avestan people spoke of him was as Apąm Napāt, 'Son of the Waters', and another was simply as 'the Ahura';[11] and it is by the latter title that he is perhaps honoured by a name in an eighth-century Assyrian text, *Auarisarn(u), interpreted tentatively as a misspelt *Auariparn(u), for Ahurafarnah, 'Having fortune through the Ahura'.[12] The regular Persian usage was, however, to speak of him as the Baga, that is, 'the Dispenser'. This usage is attested once also in the Avesta (Y 10.10), and is paralleled in the Vedas, where the god Bhaga appears, like the god Apām Napāt, to have his origin in a cult-epithet of Varuna's.[13] The Baga is honoured more than any other individual divinity in surviving Median names of the eighth and seventh centuries: *Bagdatt(u) for Bagadāta, 'Given by the Baga'; *Bagaia; *Bagparna for Bagafarnah 'Having fortune through the Baga'; and, under Sargon II (722-705),[14] *Bagmašda, presumably for Bagamazda.[15] The last name, honouring two of the Ahuras conjoined, has its counterparts in Old Persian Mesoromasdes (that is, Mithra-Ahuramazda), Middle Persian Mihrohrmazd,[16] and Old Persian Mithra-Baga, Bactrian *Bag(a)mihr.[17]

A predominance of 'Baga' names is found also in the Persian material. There is a wealth of them in the Elamite texts, including such standard compounds as Bagapāta 'Protected by the Baga', Bagadāta 'Given by the Baga', Bagadušta 'Beloved of the Baga', and Bagafarnah 'Having fortune through the Baga'.[18] Further, in a collection of twenty Iranian names in Aramaic documents from 'Khomadešu' (probably a town in Pars), dated to between 526 and 522, half are compounded with 'the Baga'.[19] The ardent devotion thus attested to Varuna accords well with the praise of this god in an ancient verse of the Avesta as 'the hero who gives help when called upon . . . who being prayed to is the swiftest

[11] See HZ I 49-51, 58. Attempts have been made to find a solitary occurrence in the OP inscriptions of 'Ahura' for Ahuramazda, in DPe 24, see Kent, Old Persian, 156; but against this see Benveniste, cited by Kent, ibid., s.v. *aura-*.

[12] See Diakonov, loc. cit. in n. 3.

[13] See Boyce, 'Varuna the Baga', Mon. G. Morgenstierne, Vol. I, Acta Iranica, in press. (The remarks about Baga in HZ I 75-8 are to be modified accordingly.) For Varuna Apām Napāt see HZ I, 44-7.

[14] See Diakonov, loc. cit.

[15] See Grantovsky apud Duchesne-Guillemin, art. cit. in n. 3, 20.

[16] For references see HZ I 49, nn. 175, 176.

[17] Preserved in the Kushan proper name Vakamihira, see Henning, 'A Sogdian god', BSOAS XXVIII, 1965, 250. On OP Mithra-Baga see below, pp. 139, 140, 283.

[18] OnP 8.185 (with RT no. 16:3 et pass.), 8.192, 196. 207 (with RT no. 22:2).

[19] See R. Zadok, 'On the connections between Iran and Babylonia in the 6th century B.C.', Iran XIV, 1976, 62, 67-77.

of all to hear'.[20] In the Avesta as a whole, however, Varuna is less honoured than his brother-Ahura, Mithra; and internal evidence suggests that, having been a creator-god in the old religion, he largely relinquished his role in Zoroastrianism to Ahuramazda, the Creator.[21] The huge popularity of Varuna 'the Baga' in western Iran may therefore be presumed to have its origins in the old pre-Zoroastrian faith.

The Medes and Persians thus appear to have been devout adherents from of old of the Ahuric religion. Whether they also honoured in their pantheon the divinities abjured by Zoroaster as the Daevas[22] does not appear from their nomenclature; but very few names are attested from earlier than the sixth century B.C.—that is, from before the period when Zoroastrianism may be presumed to have been exerting its influence, and it is possible that 'daēva'-names were given once, but had been consciously abandoned, in Persepolis at least, by that epoch.

In the Avesta both the lesser Ahuras are actively associated with 'khvarenah', divine grace or fortune.[23] The Median form of the word was 'farnah'; and the two Median names already discussed which appear to be compounded with this, *Auriparna and *Bagparna, 'Having fortune through the Ahura/Baga' both seek this gift through Varuna. The Zoroastrian pantheon also knows Khvarenah as a yazata; and Median veneration of this divinity is perhaps expressed in such names as *Parnua, for Farnavahu (?) 'Good is Farnah', and *Siṭirparn(a) for *Čithrafarnah (?) 'Having the nature of Farnah',[24] while there is no doubt about the names Farnahdāta and Dātafarnah 'Given by Farnah', attested at Persepolis.[25] Names with 'farnah' as a common noun also occur there, and among them is Ātarfarnah, 'Having fortune through Ātar'.[26] Veneration for the Iranian god of fire was certainly to be expected among the Medes and Persians, and it is attested in the Elamite tablets by a number of other theophoric names, among them Ātarpāta 'Protected by Ātar', Ātarbānu 'Having the radiance of Ātar', and Ātardāta 'Given by Ātar'.[27]

[20] Yt 19.52, see HZ I 42. The wealth of 'Baga-' names in OP and Mlr. has been tabulated by Ph. Gignoux in articles in AAH XXV, 1977, 119-27; Pad nām i Yazdān (ed. Gignoux), Paris 1979, 88-90; and Iranica (ed. Gnoli-Rossi), 365-73.

[21] See HZ I 50-1.

[22] See HZ I 54-5.

[23] See HZ I 42-3. With regard to 'khvarenah' the writer now accepts the return advocated by J. Duchesne-Guillemin (see HZ I 67 n. 296) to the older etymology which links the word with *hvar* 'sun'. For further bibliography see Gh. Gnoli, Comm. Cyrus 2, Acta Iranica 2, 1974, 172 n. 308. For *hvar-* 'glow' see now R. E. Emmerick apud Duchesne-Guillemin, ZDMG, Supp. Bd. IV, 1980, 60 n. 7.

[24] See Diakonov, loc. cit. in n. 3.

[25] OnP 8.1281, 367.

[26] OnP 8.491.

[27] OnP 492, 497, 502.

A divinity who in the Avesta is linked with Ātar is Nairyōsanha, apparently an ancient Iranian god of prayer, associated with fire through priestly and domestic cults. He appears in the Elamite tablets as Nariṣanka (na-ri-ša-an-ka).[28] Another cultic divinity, the Indo-Iranian *Sauma, is honoured in the Aramaic texts at Persepolis by the name Haumadāta (hwmdt) 'Given by Hauma';[29] and perhaps by a hypocoristic *Haumaka in the tablets.[30] Several other of the Avestan 'nature gods' also appear: the divinities of sun and moon, venerated through the names (H)uvardāta and Māh(a)dāta;[31] and the wind-god Vāta, if the Elamite ma-da-par-na is rightly to be interpreted as Vātafarnah 'Having fortune through Vāta'.[32]

Other divine names occur at Persepolis which either show, or appear to show, Zoroastrian influences (such as the numerous ones compounded with that of the divinity Arta), or which present problems which must be considered in their Achaemenian setting. Those which have already been cited establish that the western Iranians did indeed share a common religious tradition with the Avestan people. The most striking feature is the evident prominence among them of belief in the ethical Ahuras. It may be that the existence among the western Iranians of a strong, polytheistic Ahuric faith was in itself a barrier to the spread of Zoroastrianism, which represented a reform of that faith with the exaltation of Ahuramazda as the only eternal, uncreated God. The new teaching from the east brought with it of necessity a dimunition of the dignity of all other benevolent divine beings who, Zoroaster taught, were Ahuramazda's evocations only; and this may have been a difficult doctrine for devotees of, say, Mithra or Varuna to accept, while being even more of a barrier for ardent adherents of the abjured daevic divinities.[33]

The myth of King Yama

That the western and eastern Iranians also inherited a common store of myths is shown by the appearance on the Persepolis tablets of the Indo-Iranian Yama (Av. Yima), king of the dead, in the personal names Yama, Yamakka and Yamakšedda (Av. Yima khšaēta 'King Yama').[34] To understand the evident popularity of this mythical figure among the ancient Persians it is perhaps instructive to consider his prominence

[28] OnP 1243. On him see HZ I 61.
[29] RT no. 14:2, cf. Cowley, Aram. Papyri, 8:2, 9:2.
[30] OnP 8.1715, cf. 1716.
[31] OnP 8.1718, 1760; RT no. 5:3 (mhdt).
[32] OnP 8.911.
[33] On such considerations see in more detail HZ I 251 ff.
[34] OnP 8.1792-1795. On Yama/Yima see HZ I 92-6.

with an Indo-Aryan people, the 'Kafirs' of the Hindu Kush.[35] They venerated him as 'Imro' ('Yama Raja'), and believed him to reign as Creator and supreme god. He also, however, in their mythology guards the gates of subterranean hell and prevents the return to earth of any of the dead. This activity perpetuates his primary role as king of the underworld; and his elevation to supreme god was presumably due to the immense importance which the cult of the dead attained down the centuries for the isolated Kafirs.[36] It was perhaps the importance of this cult for the ancient Persians also which caused them to honour Yama through personal names; or perhaps it was simply the splendour which surrounded the figure of the mythical first king.

The priesthood

The immense conservatism of the Indo-Iranian religious tradition clearly owes much to the existence of a powerful hereditary priesthood. The Vedic and Avestan peoples had a common word for priest, *āthravan/atharvan*, but the only term recorded among the western Iranians of old is *magu*, which continued in use down to and during the Sasanian period (by then modified to *mog*).[37] Herodotus, writing in the mid fifth century B.C., states that no Persian then could offer sacrifice without a 'magos' being present to perform the appropriate rites;[38] and he describes the 'magoi' collectively as one of the Median tribes, and as a body of priests.[39] However, the Persians in the sixth century also used the word 'magu' of their priests; and so it must be assumed either that under the Median Empire the term had gained currency in western Iran for 'priest' generally, without an ethnic connotation, or that the Persians too had had their 'magu' independently of the Medes. The original meaning of the term, it has been suggested, was perhaps 'member of the tribe' (as in Av. *moghu*), given a special sense among the Medes as 'member of the priestly tribe'.[40] This suggestion was made in the light of Herodotus' definition; but possibly the word was used in fact rather more generally by both Medes and Persians for 'member of the priesthood'; and it may have been the prominence of Median magi in Asia

[35] See G. Robertson, The Kafirs of the Hindu-Kush, London 1896 (repr. New York 1970); K. Jettmar, Die Religionen des Hindukusch, Stuttgart 1975; G. Fussmann, 'Pour une problèmatique nouvelle des religions indiennes anciennes', JA 1977, 21-70.
[36] Otherwise Fussmann, art. cit.
[37] On the attempts to discover the Avestan term in the Elamite material from Persepolis see below, pp. 135-6, 137.
[38] I.132.
[39] I.101, 140.
[40] For this interpretation by E. Benveniste see HZ I 10-11.

Minor in his day, or perhaps simply a misunderstanding, which caused Herodotus to give it his narrower definition.

A piece of evidence which was once thought to support this definition was the clothing of the western Iranian priests; for there are representations from the Achaemenian period of men who appear to be magi, in that they are engaged in solemnizing ritual acts; and these men are shown wearing what used to be called 'Median' garb, that is, the trousers and close-fitting tunic of a horseman, sometimes with a sleeved mantle (called, in Greek rendering, the 'kandys'). It has now been established, however, as we have seen, that this type of dress, with only minor variations, was in fact worn generally by Iranians of east and west in the sixth century (and presumably earlier); and that the Persians themselves kept it as their military garb, wearing the Elamite robe probably only at home and at court.[41]

The chief sartorial feature by which the Iranian peoples distinguished themselves from one another was their headgear;[42] and the head-covering favoured by the western Iranians was the type of hood, made of felt, which the Greeks called the 'tiara' (this being, it is supposed, their rendering of the Iranian word for it). The tiara had side-flaps which could be tied across nose and mouth as a protection from the dust stirred up by hooves;[43] and the Achaemenian representations show that the magi tied the side flaps in this same way while performing ritual acts, presumably to prevent the polluting human breath reaching consecrated objects.[44] Trousers and tunic likewise were practical wear for working priests, since there were no superfluous folds of drapery to brush against sanctified vessels; and still today for this reason Zoroastrian priests wear simply the sacred shirt and close-fitting trousers when solemnizing rituals, donning more flowing garments only outside the ritual precinct.

[41] See above, p. 10. It seems necessary, therefore, to doubt the accuracy of Herodotus' information when he records (I.135) that the Persians had adopted Median dress. Possibly this was a 5th-century attempt to explain the difference between Persian civilian and military wear.

[42] See in general, on the importance of differences in headgear for establishing origins and standing, H. von Gall, 'Die Kopfbedeckung des persischen Ornats bei den Achämeniden', AMI, N.F. VII, 1974, 145-61.

[43] In detail on the tiara see J. D. Beazley, The Lewes House collection of ancient gems, Oxford 1920, 82-4; E. S. G. Robinson, 'Greek coins acquired by the British Museum 1938-1948 I' NC 1948, 48 ff. (references which I owe to the kindness of my colleague Dr. A. D. H. Bivar).

[44] On the concept of the breath as polluting see HZ I 306, 309. In none of the Achaemenian representations of priests is a 'paitidāna' portrayed. This, mentioned in Vd XIV. 8, XVIII.1, is known from traditional usage as a small piece of fine cloth tied so as to hang over nose and mouth. Since it hangs loosely, there is a double advantage: it is relatively cool, and an officiating priest can raise it easily in order to partake of consecrated offerings. Nevertheless in western Iran the tiara with its flaps seems to have been used well into the Parthian period, at least in Asia Minor, see Strabo XV.3.15.

It seems likely, therefore, that when the Persians settled in Anshan their priests chose to retain a form of garment worn generally up till then by the western Iranians, because this was well adapted to their professional needs; and that they only joined with the Persian nobility in wearing the Elamite robe on ceremonial and domestic occasions. The 'Median' dress would thus be Median in so far as it was regularly worn by all Medes; but it seems to have been worn also by some Persians, i.e. the working priests, and soldiers.

A traditional way of distinguishing rank and calling in Iran (attested in the Zoroastrian literature and by known custom in later times) was by colour: thus priests customarily wore white, whereas 'warriors' peacocked it in reds and purples and other brilliant hues.[45] So presumably if the paint had not worn off the ancient sculptures, priests and nobles would be instantly distinguishable, even when dressed in clothes of the same style.[46]

Nothing further is known of the western Iranian magi in the pre-Zoroastrian period, except the fact (to be assumed from Herodotus, and from their subsequent history) that their calling was hereditary, passing from father to son. It is reasonable, however, to suppose that the existence of this hereditary priesthood, with its own traditions and forms of worship, was a major factor in western Iranian resistance to Zoroastrian proselytizing.

Sacred places

The Medes and Persians can be supposed to have inherited the common Indo-Iranian tradition of worshipping in the open air or at the hearth-fire, without temples, images or altars, and this supposition receives negative confirmation from the fact that the Assyrians, in recording their campaigns, never list spoils from Median temples, or record destroying or carrying off the statues of Median gods.

The ancient Iranian rites of worship could be solemnized in any clean, open place;[47] but to judge from the known observances of later times seasonal celebrations, for which people came together, were carried out especially at high places, and by springs of water. The probability is therefore that it was the Medes who early gave the Iranian name of *Bagastāna 'Place of the Gods' to the impressive mountain now known

[45] So Diogenes Laertius (Proemium I.2.7; Clemen, Fontes, 75, F.-P. 81), writing in the Parthian period, states that the magi 'dress in white'. This remains the custom in both branches of the Zoroastrian community down to the present day.

[46] For the Dascylion 'magus' in a purple cloak see below, pp. 146-7.

[47] See HZ I 160-1.

as Behistun. ('Baga', from meaning 'dispenser (of good)', had come to be used by the Iranians as a general term also for divinity.) This mountain, rising by the Khorasan Highway between the Mahi Dasht and the Hamadan plain, stood in the heart of Median territory, and would have been a suitable and conspicuous meeting-point for the tribes; and springs of water, bubbling up at its foot, made it a natural place for Iranian worship.

In connection with worship in high places, a serious attempt has been made to attribute to the Persians, as early as the eighth century B.C., the building of a number of majestic stone terraces on hillsides in the territory of ancient Elam.[48] Notable among these are the terraces excavated at Masjed-i Solaiman and Bard-i Neshande in modern Khuzistan; and the terrace at Pasargadae, in north-west Pars, was also included, on the theory that this must have been begun by the ancestors of Cyrus the Great, and merely repaired by him. The suggestion was that the Persians were able to penetrate peacefully into empty lands, where they were accepted without bloodshed as vassals by the kings of Elam; and so, not having to fight, like the Medes against the formidable Assyrians, they were able, it was argued, to devote their energies at once to constructing these imposing sanctuaries, built laboriously with huge blocks of stone.

Other excavations have shown, however, that, as written records also attest, Elam was a strong and warlike state early in the first millennium, whose power reached up into the Zagros valleys, where Elamite and Assyrian kings vied with one another for control and influence. The Persians may have settled peacefully at first in some thinly populated places, but later they apparently fought hard to take possession of Elamite cities and strongholds.[49] The pattern which has emerged, moreover, is that they first established their dominance in the kingdom of Anshan; and they do not seem to have taken possession of the western kingdom of Susa (that is, modern Khuzistan) until after Cyrus occupied Babylonia in 539 B.C.[50] All this, together with the fact that no objects have been found at Masjed-i Solaiman or Bard-i Neshande datable to before the fifth century B.C., makes it impossible to accept the theory that these structures were built by Persians in the settlement period. Bare hillsides doubtless then still sufficed both for them and for the

[48] See R. Ghirshman, Terrasses sacrées, I, Ch. 8. (More generally on ancient 'high places' in Iran see below, Ch. 11 n. 10.)
[49] See Ch. 1, n. 19.
[50] Against the statement by Strabo (XV.3.2) see convincingly R. Zadok, art. cit. in n. 19, 61-2.

Medes, with natural rocks for altars; although it is probable (as the name *Bagastāna suggests) that certain places came to be regarded by them as sacred, to be visited regularly for worship at appointed seasons.

Festivals and the calendar

There is nothing in Indo-Iranian tradition to suggest that an ancient custom existed of holding communal celebrations in honour of individual gods. Within the Iranian community the Avestan names of the festivals reconsecrated, it seems, by Zoroaster to his own faith[51] indicate the practice of observing pastoral and seasonal feasts, which were once celebrated presumably in honour of 'all the gods'. The only other Iranian evidence for ancient usage in this respect is that furnished by the Old Persian calendar, whose month-names, first attested in the inscriptions of Darius the Great, doubtless go back in origin to the pagan past. As the only pre-Zoroastrian calendar to survive, this has been subjected to intense scrutiny[52]—a scrutiny which became the more fruitful after the correspondence had been established between the months and the natural seasons.[53] Of the nine month-names recorded, those whose meaning is fairly definitely established appear to be descriptive and practical in character: Viykhana- '(Month) of digging' (February/March),[54] Ādukanaiša- 'Of corn-sowing' (March/April),[55] Garmapada- 'Of the time of heat' (June/July).[56] Of the six remaining names, three have been much discussed as having a possible religious connotation. One of these, Anāmaka- (December/January) has been understood as '(the month) of the Nameless One', which—because this winter month is dedicated in the Zoroastrian calendar to the Creator—was interpreted as meaning 'of the highest God' i.e. Ahuramazda.[57] This interpretation cannot be seriously entertained, however, for speaking of the greatest of the Ahuras by both his proper name and title appears as characteristic of pagan Iranian as it is of Zoroastrian usage. A link, tentatively proposed, between OP

[51] See HZ I 173-5.
[52] From the time of the first comprehensive study by F. Justi, 'Die altpersischen Monate', ZDMG LI, 1897, 245 ff.
[53] By A. Poebel, 'The names and order of the Old Persian month-names during the Achaemenian period', AJSL LV, 1938, 130-65, 285-314; LVI, 1939, 121-45. The month-names are listed by R. Kent, Old Persian, Appendix IV, and G. Cameron, PTT, 44-5. Bibliographies for each individual month-name are given by Brandenstein and Mayrhofer, Handbuch des Altpersischen, s.v. On the formation of the month-names in general see Kent, op. cit., 8, 165; W. Eilers, 'Der alte Name des persischen Neujahrsfestes', 43 n.
[54] See Cameron, op. cit., 45.
[55] See R. E. Emmerick, 'Some re-interpretations in the Avesta', TPS 1966, 1-7. (Otherwise Hinz, Neue Wege, 65-6.)
[56] See Justi, art. cit., 247.
[57] So Justi, art. cit., 248.

Anāmaka- and Skt. anāmaka- 'intercalary month',[58] seems therefore to suggest a more promising line of investigation.

Much has been written about the name Bāgayādi-. This belonged to an autumn month (September/October), in which in Achaemenian times the festival of *Mithrakāna was held. It was suggested, therefore, that the name meant '(the month) of worship of Baga', the Baga being formerly understood to be Mithra.[59] It is now known, however, that the Baga was not Mithra;[60] and it is moreover likely that *Mithrakāna was established, under alien influences, long after the Old Persian names were first given to the months.[61] Further, there are formal philological objections to the proposed etymology.[62] On every count, therefore, this explanation of the name has to be rejected. An alternative interpretation is that it meant simply '(the month) of fertilizing (?) the farmland (*bāga-*)',[63] whereby it becomes concordant with Viykhana and Ādukanaiša-.

There remains the name Āṣiyādaya-, given to the month November/December. This has long been understood to derive from *Ātṛ-yādiya-, and to mean '(the month) of the worship of fire';[64] and though philological objections have been raised to this also, these have been met.[65] On general grounds, the interpretation is acceptable; for it is at this time of year that the Zoroastrian festival of Sada takes place,[66] which is not only probably pre-Zoroastrian in origin, but may even go back to proto-Indo-European times. For Sada is a great open-air fire festival, of a kind celebrated widely among the Indo-European peoples, with the intention of strengthening the heavenly fire, the sun, in its winter decline and feebleness. Sun and fire being of profound significance in the Old Iranian religion, this is a festival which one would expect the Medes and Persians to have brought with them into their new lands; and the naming of a month after such an observance—one held moreover at a time of year when little was happening in pasture or field—seems natural. Sada is

[58] See Brandenstein-Mayrhofer, op. cit., 103 s.v.

[59] So Justi, art. cit., 247.

[60] See above. On the various complications (such as the Sogdian name for the autumn month Sept./Oct., βγkʾn) see Boyce, art. cit. in n. 13.

[61] See further below.

[62] See Henning, 'The Murder of the Magi', JRAS 1944, 134 n. 2.

[63] See (tentatively) ibid., n. 3. Followed by Hinz, Neue Wege, 67-8. OP *bāga* for a parcel of land occurs in Aramaic documents, see G. R. Driver, Aramaic Documents of the Fifth Century B.C., 2nd ed., Oxford 1957, no. VIII and pp. 39-40.

[64] See Justi, art. cit., 247.

[65] For references see Brandenstein-Mayrhofer, op. cit., 100 s.v.; and add Hinz, Neue Wege, 68-9.

[66] For reasons for considering the traditional Yazdi celebration of this feast in Ādur Māh (Nov./Dec.) to be on the true ancient date see Boyce, 'The two dates of the feast of Sada', Farhang-e Irān Zamin XXI, 1976, 25-40.

not, however, a feast in honour of the god of Fire, Ātar, but is rather for the general strengthening of the creation of fire against the onslaught of winter. Its existence does not, therefore, invalidate the deduction that there were no ancient Iranian festivals dedicated to individual gods.

In the light of this general consideration some doubt must exist about the recent interpretation of the name of the third Old Persian month, *Thāigarčiš. This used to be understood as the month 'of the gathering of garlic'.[67] In the Elamite of Darius' inscription the name appears as *Sākurriziš (with variants); and it has now been connected with *Sākurziš, an otherwise unknown god mentioned on Elamite tablets from Persepolis.[68] More evidence seems needed before a firm conclusion can be reached in the matter.

Funerary rites

Excavations have shown that the Medes practised the traditional Iranian rite of inhumation.[69] Cemeteries have been found at several presumed Median sites;[70] and at Sialk over two hundred graves were examined in what is held to be a Median cemetery (Necropolis B), dated by the excavators to the eight century B.C. Here the corpse was invariably put directly in the earth, lying on its side in a contracted position. Grave-goods were placed beside it, and then earth was heaped over to form a raised mound, which was covered securely with large slabs of stone, leaning inwards one against another.[71] The objects placed in the graves varied in number and quality, whereby the excavators thought they could distinguish between those of rich and poor; but no specially large grave-mounds were found, or any that were set apart in any marked way, or equipped with strikingly lavish goods. Gold was unknown, but ornaments of silver, bronze or even iron (still then a rare metal on the plateau) were present in the graves of men, women and children. Men also had weapons, usually of bronze (daggers, arrow-heads, axes, maces, very rarely a sword), and reaping hooks were found generally, in both richly and poorly furnished graves.[72] Bronze bits, small bells (such as the Iranians attached to bridles) and harness-ornaments were also dis-

[67] See Justi, art. cit., 243.

[68] See Hallock, PFT 749-50 s.v. Sākurriziš for spelling-variants of the month-name. The god's name *Sākurziš occurs in an unpublished text, see Hallock apud Duchesne-Guillemin in G. Walser (ed.), Beiträge zur Achämenidengeschichte, 68.

[69] See HZ I 109 ff.

[70] See above, pp. 6-7.

[71] See Ghirshman, Sialk II, 26 ff. with Plates VII, VIII; Iran, 77 ff. with Plate 2b.

[72] See Ghirshman, Sialk II, 48.

covered; but by far the greatest number of grave-goods were of pottery—jars, cups, platters, pots and vases. One tomb contained twenty-seven such objects, and the excavators thought that some of them might have been used in the funerary rites (for libations, and a last ritual meal), and then have been added to the grave-goods proper before the earth was heaped in.[73]

There must have been a hope that such grave-goods, taken from among the possessions of the dead, could be of use to them in spirit-form in the hereafter; and since they were found in every burial, these Median graves give no indication of that diversity of beliefs concerning the after-life (Paradise for the rich and powerful, a subterranean land of shades for the poor and weak) which has been postulated among the Indo-Iranians.[74] The furnishing of graves may well, however, be a tradition which persisted generally as a pious act (like the making of food offerings),[75] despite the development of hope for some of a future with the gods on high, when they would lack for nothing. The care with which the Iranians of Sialk interred their dead, protecting them from disturbance with heavy stones, is certainly compatible with hope of resurrection of the body, and the need accordingly to preserve its physical framework, to be clothed again in Paradise with immortal flesh; but it cannot of course be taken as proof of such a belief. What it does establish is that the western Iranians, in their pre-Zoroastrian days, invested the rite of burial with significance, and regarded it as a service which the living owed to the dead. If, as seems likely, the eastern religion brought with it the funerary rite of exposure,[76] this may well have been yet another factor in western Iranian resistance to the faith.

Influences from alien faiths: alien gods

Virtually nothing is known of the religion of the aboriginal people of the Iranian plateau, whom the incoming Medes and Persians finally absorbed, subjugated or slaughtered; and there are many gaps in knowledge even of the religions of the great urban civilizations which they encountered to the west, let alone those of the Zagrosian peoples. This was a time of ethnic faiths, when each people honoured its own gods, and acknowledged the existence of its neighbours' divinities; and even imperial Assyria, it has been shown, did not seek to suppress the beliefs

[73] See ibid., 29.
[74] See HZ I 109-10.
[75] See HZ I 120.
[76] See HZ I 113-4, 325.

and cults of those whom she conquered, or to replace them by her own.[77] 'Only the populations of those lands permanently annexed to Assyria as provinces experienced partial religious dictation; residents of vassal states were free of any religious obligations towards their imperial masters'.[78] Indeed, after a harsh campaign an Assyrian king might even order the rebuilding of ruined temples, and the return of divine images,[79] while 'votive offerings by the Assyrian king to non-Assyrian gods were looked upon as accruing goodwill on the king's behalf'.[80] A stele has been found in Median territory, to the west of Mt. Alvand,[81] upon which Sargon II, after putting down ruthlessly a revolt by the Ellipi in Kharkar, recorded (referring, it seems, to the Ellipi chief): 'His temples I (re)built, and I returned his gods to their places'.[82]

The western Medes, together with the other Zagrosian peoples who were tributary to Assyria, had thus no deliberate pressures to withstand in the religious sphere; and to the south the Elamites, whom the Persians encountered, are wholly unlikely to have had either the power or desire to force any religious beliefs on the incomers. In general, it seems, the strength of the Iranians' own religious tradition enabled them to resist more insidious and persuasive influences (such as had led the Elamites, for instance, over the centuries to adopt a number of Babylonian divinities into their own pantheon), even though 'this was the age of Assyrian domination, when mass folk-movement, land resettlement and military upheaval promoted international intercourse', and when, among the Semitic peoples at least, Assyrian trading and military involvement seems to have encouraged the spread of Mesopotamian beliefs.[83]

Yet it would be strange if the Medes and Persians had managed to remain impervious to all religious influences from the ancient and splendid civilizations with which they had contact in their new lands. In the first millennium B.C. each of the major pantheons which they must have come to know was presided over by a dominant male divinity: Marduk in Babylon, in Assyria Assur, Humban in Elam, Khaldi in Urartu; and it may have been partly to confront these alien supreme gods that the greatest of the Ahuras, Ahuramazda, was exalted, it seems,

[77] See K. Galling, 'Syrien in der Politik der Achaemeniden bis ... 448 v. Chr.', Der Alte Orient 36, 3/4, 1937, 28; J. McKay, Religion in Judah under the Assyrians; Morton Cogan, Imperialism and Religion.
[78] Cogan, op. cit., 49.
[79] See ibid., 38.
[80] Ibid., 39.
[81] See L. D. Levine, Two Neo-Assyrian Stelae from Iran, 25 ff.
[82] See ibid., 40 l. 44; and comment by Cogan, op. cit., 55.
[83] See McKay, op. cit., 68.

to a supreme place in the western Iranian pantheon even before the coming of Zoroastrianism, so that to the Elamites at least he was known as 'the god of the Iranians'.[84] It may be, however, that as *Asura Medhā he had already held such a position in the ancient Indo-Iranian pantheon, and that the Medes and Persians were in this simply being loyal to the beliefs of their distant forefathers. (The apparent development among the Indians that, as 'the Asura', he was so much exalted that he became a remote and almost forgotten god in the Vedic pantheon means that there is a dearth of comparative material in this regard.[85]) Whatever the original beliefs may have been, the western Iranians were clearly now able to set Ahuramazda as their own chief god against the chief gods of the Near Eastern peoples among whom they found themselves.

i) *Mithra and Shamash*

The lesser Ahura Mithra had his own natural counterpart in the Mesopotamian Shamash. That great divinity was god of the sun, but he was venerated also as lord of justice and righteousness, the 'great judge' and fount of human laws.[86] His cult, powerful in Babylon and Assyria, is thought to have influenced that of the Elamite sun-god Nahhunte, who too was associated with justice, and presided over its administration.[87] The Iranian Mithra, conversely, was, it seems, by origin god of covenants, and so of legal proceedings to enforce these; and the process of judicial ordeals had given him a link with fire, and so with the greatest of fires, the sun, with which he was also associated as the 'eye of heaven', with which he travelled daily across the sky to observe men's conduct in the world beneath.[88] The Iranians had their own solar deity, Hvar Khšaēta, the 'Radiant Sun'; but he clearly was not of the stature and range of powers to confront great Shamash, and so, it seems, it was Mithra who was matched by the magi with the Akkadian god, the two being in the first millennium B.C. very similar divinities.[89] There was therefore no

[84] Elamite version of the Behistun inscription III.77 (King and Thompson, 147). Although the phrase is recorded only in Zoroastrian times, it has a wholly unZoroastrian ring.

[85] See HZ I 37-40.

[86] See Tallqvist, Akkadische Götterepitheta, 456-7.

[87] See Hinz, Lost World of Elam, 47-8, 104 with Pl. 27, 106-7.

[88] See HZ I 28-9.

[89] The pairing of the two divinities has been treated latterly by Gh. Gnoli, 'Politique religieuse et conception de la royauté sous les Achéménides', Comm. Cyrus II, Acta Iranica 2, Leiden 1974, 117-90; but he confuses matters by seeking to associate Mithra not only with Babylonian Shamash, but also with Babylonian Nabū, god of the planet Mercury (see ibid., 132-5). He bases this on material from Mithraism, and the Commagene identification of Mithra with Hermes. Such data belong, however, to the synchronisms of the much later Hellenistic age, and are valueless for the Neo-Assyrian period or Achaemenian Iran.

fundamental change to be wrought in Mithra's concept by this pairing; but it may well be that it was through this confrontation that he came to be worshipped more and more as a sun-god among the western Iranians—a development which must have been encouraged by the fact that the cult of the sun was a very powerful one throughout the ancient Near East.

ii) *Anāhiti and Ishtar/Nana*

All major Akkadian divinities were linked with a star; and Shamash the sun-god had close mythological connections with Ishtar, goddess of the planet Venus. In the first millennium Ishtar was an enormously powerful divinity, whose cult had invaded a number of pantheons outside the Semitic world.[90] She was worshipped as goddess both of love and war, and this is thought to be because in earlier times the planet's morning and evening appearances had been regarded as those of two different though related stars, with the divinity of the evening star being held to be female, that of the morning star male; but by Neo-Assyrian times the identity of the planet as seen at dawn and twilight had been accepted by Babylonian astronomers.[91] It cannot be supposed that this identity had been perceived earlier by the Iranians; but it appears probable that they themselves were accustomed to venerate the brilliant planet, either at its morning or its evening appearance, as the goddess *Anāhiti, 'the Pure One' (the Iranian form is known through the Greek rendering Anaitis, being otherwise attested only by Middle Iranian Anāhīt, Anāhīd, Persian Nāhīd).[92] They now, it seems, learnt to worship this goddess at both the planet's appearances, and came to associate her with the hugely powerful Ishtar;[93] and it was this association, it seems, which led Herodotus to record that the Persians learnt 'to sacrifice to the "Heavenly Goddess" from the Assyrians and Arabians.

[90] On her see C. Wilcke, 'Inanna/Ishtar', Reallexicon d. Assyrologie u. Vorderasiatischen Archäologie V 1/2, 1976, 74-87.

[91] See F. X. Kugler, Sternkunde und Sterndienst, I 10, cf. II 19.

[92] Bartholomae (Air.Wb. 125 s.v. *an-āhita*) reconstructed the Iranian form as *anāhitiš. This, but for the internal *ī*, would be a regular feminine bahuvrihi, cf. Lommel, Yāšts, 29. Long *ī* was assumed from MP (?)*n'hyt*, NP *nāhīd/nāhēd*; and so it was supposed that Gk Anaitis was written by itacism for *Anaeitis (with *ei* for OP *ī*, as elsewhere). It now seems more probable that early OP had an etymologically regular short *i* which became lengthened in late OP or MP, as was regular after the loss of the final syllable, see M. Back, Die sassanidischen Staatsinschriften, 70 (to which Dr. N. Sims-Williams very kindly drew my attention).

[93] That the concept of Anaitis owed much to that of Ishtar was first suggested by H. Gressmann, Archiv f. Religionswissenschaft XX, 1920, 35 ff., 323 ff. For rejections of some of the numerous other identifications proposed see Ed. Meyer, 'Anaitis', W. H. Roscher's Ausführliches Lexicon d. griechischen u. romischen Mythologie, Leipzig 1884-1886, I, 330-4; F. Cumont, ERE I, 474 ff.; H. Lommel, Yāšts, 26-32.

She is called by the Assyrians Aphrodite Mylitta, by the Arabians Alilat, by the Persians Mitra'.[94] 'Mitra', it is assumed, is a mistake here for 'Anaitis',[95] perhaps because of the slight similarity between 'Mithra' and 'Mylitta'. The latter name, it has now been established, is Herodotus' rendering of 'Mullissu', the Assyrian equivalent of NIN.LÍL in the first millennium B.C.;[96] and NIN.LÍL was sometimes closely associated with Assur, and then identified with Ishtar.

Opportunities were certainly not lacking for the Iranians to encounter the cult of Ishtar. She was one of the Babylonian divinities who had entered the Elamite pantheon; and her veneration is attested also in the Central Zagros. On the rocks of Sar-i Pul, a pass of the Khorasan Highway to the west of Kermanshah, there is a carving which celebrates the triumph of a king of the Lullubi (an ancient Zagrosian people).[97] He stands with one foot upon a fallen foe, and faces a goddess identified in the accompanying cuneiform text as MÙŠ, that is, Ishtar. She is armed, with weapons on her back, and holds in one hand the ring of divinity,[98] while with the other she has in leash two more of the king's enemies, bound and kneeling. This carving, of Babylonian inspiration, was to have traceable influence on Iranian iconography.

In Mesopotamian art Ishtar, as goddess of war, is regularly represented with bow and quiver, mace or sword, while as goddess of love she was joined in myth with Dumuzi (Biblical Tammuz), whose death was ritually mourned each year, and his restoration to life rejoiced at thereafter. This cult too made its way into Iranian observance, and was carried eventually to the far north-east, where it is attested in the Sasanian period among the Sogdians, in association with a divine being termed 'Nana the Lady' (nnδm'βn).[99] Many Sogdian personal names were compounded with that of Nanā,[100] who appears in origin to be the Babylonian goddess thus named, a being whose concept was close to that of Ishtar. At Erech (the centre of the Dumuzi cult) Nanā and Ishtar

[94] I.131.
[95] So Spiegel, EA II 59.
[96] See Stephanie Dalley, RA 73, 1979, 177-8.
[97] See Herzfeld, Am Tor von Asien, 3 ff. with Pl. 2; N. C. Debevoise, 'The Rock Reliefs of Ancient Iran', JNES I, 1942, 80-2; Ursula Seidl apud W. Orthmann, Propyläen Kunstgeschichte XIV, 301-2 (with references to other studies by Assyriologists).
[98] On the ring as a general symbol of divine power, held by any of the 'Great Gods', and never in ancient representations bestowed on a mortal, see van Buren, Symbols of the Gods, 155-8. Gnoli, art. cit. in n. 89, 134, argued for political motives underlying the adoption of Ishtar's cult by the Persian kings; but Professor W. G. Lambert (in a letter) observes in this respect: 'I should not have thought Ishtar was more particularly connected with absolute kingship than other major deities'.
[99] See W. B. Henning, 'A Sogdian god', BSOAS XXVIII, 1965, 252 with n. 67.
[100] See Henning, 'The Date of the Sogdian Ancient Letters', BSOAS XII, 1948, 602-3.

both had shrines within the temple of Anu, the sky-god; and Nanā's dignity there was only a little less than that of Ishtar herself. (Twelve gold vessels containing liquids were set daily before the statue of Ishtar, ten before that of Nanā.[101]) Like Ishtar, Nanā was venerated as the goddess of Venus, and in the third millennium B.C. offerings made on the days when that planet appeared or disappeared were linked to her worship.[102] In the middle of the second millennium a king of Elam had carried off Nanā's statue from Erech and set it up in Susa, where it remained, the object of veneration, until Assurbanipal seized it in the seventh century and restored it to Erech.[103] Nanā's cult continued nevertheless to flourish in Susa, where reference is made to it in Seleucid times. Ishtar was worshipped there also, and it seems that the Persians identified both goddesses with their Anāhiti, and used the name 'Nanā' as a by-name for their own divinity, possibly because it sounded to Iranian ears like a word for 'mother', and hence seemed an appropriate epithet for a protective female divinity.[104]

iii) *Tīri and Nabū*

In some Mesopotamian texts Nanā is hailed as the wife of Nabū, who in the first millennium was one of the Great Gods of Babylonia, ruling then over the pantheon together with his 'father' Marduk.[105] He was venerated as the god of writing, who had created this art. Writing was, it seems, unknown to the Iranians before they entered their new lands; but it is possible that the use of a cuneiform script was early acquired by the Medes from the kingdom of Urartu.[106] (In the Deiocid kingdom Aramaic must also have been used, as the common written language of the Near East in the seventh century.) The Urartians themselves are known to have derived their cuneiform system of writing from the Assyrians, from whom, so archaeologists have established, they learnt much before the two countries became rivals in power from the

[101] See F. Thureau-Dangin, Rituels accadiens, Paris 1921, 80-1.
[102] See H. Sauren, 'Les fêtes néo-sumériennes et leur periodicité', Actes de la XVIIe Rencontre Assyriologique Internationale, Bruxelles 1969, 21, 28.
[103] LAR II 812.
[104] This suggestion I owe to my colleague Dr. A. D. H. Bivar, who points out that *nanā* is used for 'mother' in some Iranian dialects. Cf. Windischmann, Die persische Anahita, 124. On the spelling of the goddess' name, with its variants *Nanai, Nanaia, see W. Eilers, Beamtennamen, 35 n. 2. References to the considerable literature on Nanā in Zoroastrian Iran will be given in later volumes of this history.
[105] See W. G. Lambert, 'The historical development of the Mesopotamian pantheon', Unity and Diversity: essays in the history, literature and religion of the Ancient Near East, ed. H. Goedicke and J. J. M. Roberts, Baltimore and London 1975, 198.
[106] See Diakonov, art. cit. in n. 3.

latter part of the ninth century;[107] and the Medes in turn appear to have adopted various elements of Assyrian civilization from Urartu, and to have passed them on in due course to the Persians. No trace has yet been found, however, of any Assyrian influence on the religion of Urartu, and no Mesopotamian god is known to have entered the Urartian pantheon. The probability is, therefore, that the first Iranians to adopt the worship of Nabū were not the Medes, but the Persians in Anshan. Nabū was yet another Babylonian god venerated by the Elamites;[108] and evidence has now been discovered which suggests that the Persians made use of the art of writing, employing Elamite scribes, from the time they conquered Anshan, in the eighth century B.C. Close scrutiny of the Elamite texts from Persepolis (of which the oldest belong to the late sixth century) has produced data which seem to show that these texts were composed by scribes who themselves spoke Persian, and who used their ancestral tongue ideogrammatically, as a written convention only.[109] Such a development presupposes the existence of generations of Elamite scribes in Persian service, who had gradually come to speak the language of their non-literate masters, and to think in it instead of in that of their own forefathers.

Many Elamites seem also to have given their children Persian names;[110] and among those recorded on the Persepolis tablets are two of special interest in connection with the cult of Nabū: Tīridāta 'Given by Tīri',[111] and (less certainly) *Tīriya, perhaps a hypocoristicon.[112] Tīri is the Persian name of the god of the planet Mercury, and, developing into Tīr, remains the Persian name of the planet to this day. For Babylonians, Mercury was the star of Nabū. Like Venus, this planet shows itself morning and evening; and again its identity behind its two diurnal appearances had been recognized by Babylonian astronomers in the

[107] See van Loon, Urartian Art, 9, 172-3 et passim.

[108] See R. Labat, CAH II 2, 402.

[109] See I. Gershevitch, 'The Alloglottography of Old Persian', TPS 1979, 114-90. Dr. Gershevitch himself assumed that the scribes were Persians who had learnt Elamite; but it does not seem likely that the dominant and traditionally non-literate Persians would themselves have so swiftly produced men willing and able to master the difficult language and script of those whom they had conquered.

[110] Benveniste identified c. 400 Iranian names on the Elamite tablets, a number of them belonging to scribes; and Gershevitch has produced many more, see his publications cited in n. 2. The predominance, as it seems, of Iranian over Elamite names was one of the reasons which led Gershevitch to suppose that the scribes in question were Persians; but it is not uncommon for a conquered people to adopt names from their conquerors, especially after they have begun to speak their language. One may instance the giving of sometimes even theophoric Babylonian names by Jews during the Captivity.

[111] OnP 8.1641; cf. RT no. 28:3 (with p. 100).

[112] OnP 8.1643.

first millennium.[113] As the planet nearest the sun, Mercury makes its circuit swiftly, and one of its Babylonian names was accordingly Shākhiṭu, the 'One who leaps'.[114] Persian Tīri, it has been suggested, deriving from an older *Tīrya, means something very similar, namely the 'One who moves (swiftly)'.[115] The planet shows brightly in Mesopotamia, but would have been less conspicuous to dwellers on the northern steppes; and it seems unlikely that the god *Tīrya was prominent among Iranian stellar divinities before his assimilation to Babylonian Nabū. That this assimilation took place is shown by the fact that Tīri became associated for Iranians with the art of writing; and this association, accepted (as the Armenian evidence shows) in Zoroastrian times, persisted in connection with the planet down into the Islamic period.[116] Further, Tīri became for the Persians a very great divinity, as was Nabū for the Babylonians; and some time after their conversion to Zoroastrianism they imposed his worship on the whole Zoroastrian community through his highly artificial identification with the Avestan Tištrya, yazata of the star Sirius.[117]

The influence of Babylonian learning

The assimilation of the two alien and associated cults of Nabū and Ishtar was probably due in the first place to a profound respect awoken in the Persian magi by the learning of the ancient Near East, as this was exemplified both in the use of writing and in exact, recorded observations of the stars (a field of study which they undoubtedly cultivated themselves). This learning presumably first reached them through the Elamites, who had long had close ties with Mesopotamia; and it was to become an even more potent influence after the Persians conquered Babylon, and Persian scholar-priests were able to take up residence in that city. The concepts of Ishtar and Nabū were moreover so powerful that once their attributes had been seen by the magi as belonging also to their own Anāhiti and Tīri, the consequences were to be far-reaching.

The re-dedication of festivals

It is not known whether the proto-Indo-Iranians celebrated a feast which they regarded as important because it marked the beginning of the calendar year; but there are indications that both Indians and

[113] See Kugler, op. cit. in n. 91, I 19-20.

[114] See for references W. Eilers, Semiramis, 43 n. 73; Sinn und Herkunft der Planetennamen, 43-4.

[115] I.e. from the root *tar-* 'go', see Gershevitch apud R. Zadok, BiOr XXXIII, 1976, 230b.

[116] See Eilers, Semiramis, loc. cit.; Planetennamen, 49-50.

[117] See HZ I 75-6 and further, pp. 204-6 below.

Iranians thought of autumn as the new year season.[118] Since the communal observances of the ancient Iranians appear in general to have been seasonal ones, it is probable, however, that they traditionally held festivals in both autumn and spring, to mark the major turning points of the natural year.

In the first millennium the Babylonians held a great new year festival in the month of Nisānu (March/April), which was then the beginning of their calendar year. This fell at the start of the corn-harvest in Babylonia, although it was spring-time on the Iranian plateau. The Babylonian observance lasted a number of days; and it included an 'akītu' ceremony, in which the images of the city's gods were carried out of their temples in procession to a temporary abode beyond the city's walls.[119] It is possible that the splendour of the Babylonian festivities at this season led the Persians to develop their own spring festival into an established new year feast, with the name *Navasarda 'New Year' (a name which, though first attested through Middle Persian derivatives, is attributable to the Achaemenian period, and is probably even older).[120] The elaboration of such a festival, with days of secular merrymaking, is likely to have pre-dated the adoption of Zoroastrianism in western Iran; and it may be that the Persian custom, still observed, of celebrating the last day of the new year festival (the thirteenth) out of doors is a vestige of the Babylonian akītu-observance.

The (presumably traditional) autumn festival of the Persians continued evidently to be of great importance for them; and perhaps because this had earlier been their new year feast, they seem now to have given it a fresh dedication, calling it *Mithrakāna, or '(Feast) of Mithra'. (Again the name survives only in Middle Iranian forms.) It has been pointed out that this feast, held at a six months' interval from *Navasarda, coincided with the Babylonian festival of the month of Tišrītu, which also appears to have its origin in an old autumn new year.[121] But Tišrītu, like the festival of Nisānu, lasted several days and embodied an akītu-observance, whereas *Mithrakāna was a festival of a single day down to Sasanian times,[122] and there is no trace in its observances of a

[118] For references see Gnoli, art. cit. in n. 89, 124 n. 36.

[119] In general on the 'akītu' see S. A. Pallis, The Babylonian Akitu Festival, Copenhagen 1926; A. Falkenstein, 'Akiti-Fest und Akiti-Festhaus', Festschrift J. Friedrich, ed. R. von Kienle et al., Heidelberg 1959, 147-82.

[120] On this name, and on the possible Babylonian connections, see J. Markwart, 'Das Naurōz, seine Geschichte und seine Bedeutung', J. J. Modi Mem. Vol., 713, 720-1; W. Eilers, 'Der alte Name des persischen Neujahrfestes', 60.

[121] See Gnoli, art. cit. in n. 89, 124.

[122] See Boyce, 'On the calendar of Zoroastrian feasts', BSOAS XXXIII, 1970, 513-39.

going out into fields. Yet alien influence does perhaps appear in what was presumably its re-naming, for Mesopotamia had many festivals in honour of individual gods; and it so happens that the Babylonian priests placed the month of September/October, in which their autumn feast too was held, under the protection of Shamash, Mithra's Mesopotamian counterpart.[123] Possibly therefore the magi, once the Persian spring festival had been designated the 'New Year' feast, found it appropriate to devote to Mithra their own traditional autumn celebration. Thereafter (to judge from the evidence of later times) they developed the theological significance of dedicating it to a god of the sun which had ripened the crops and brought the farming year to a fruitful close; and so the dedication served to strengthen Mithra's solar association, as well as steadily enhancing his greatness, for down the centuries what was now his festival continued to vie in popularity and religious symbolism with the feast of the spring new year. It too was celebrated with general merrymaking; and according to Ctesias (writing in the fourth century) this was the one occasion in the year when the Persian king permitted himself to drink to excess,[124] while Duris adds that on this day the Persians danced.[125]

This was, it seems, the first time that the Iranians had dedicated a festival by name to a single god; and it was presumably after this that they founded a similar feast for Tīri—a wholly new observance, seemingly, for a newly powerful cult. The festival of *Tīrikāna (Middle Persian Tīragān) was held (to judge from later evidence) in the fourth calendar month, corresponding to June/July. This was the season when in Babylonia—the harvest being then gathered in—rites of mourning were solemnized for the death of Dumuzi. As we have seen, these rites were adopted by Persians,[126] and it is possible that they celebrated them in conjunction with *Tīrikāna.[127] This alone among the Iranian festivals was traditionally a two-day observance,[128] perhaps by origin a day of mourning followed by one of joy for Dumuzi revived. The close links between Nabū and Ishtar possibly help to explain the naming of the feast for Tīri.

That *Tīrikāna was founded and *Mithrakāna refounded by the western Iranians in the pre-Zoroastrian period is inherently probable;

[123] See Kugler, op. cit. in n. 91, I 224; cited by Gnoli, art. cit. in n. 89, 125.

[124] Apud Athenaeus, Deipnosoph. X.45.434 (Clemen, Fontes, 66; F.-P. 72).

[125] Ibid. (Clemen, Fontes, 26; F.-P. 27).

[126] See above, p. 30 with nn. 99, 100.

[127] See L. H. Gray, ERE V, 872, 874-5; cited by Gnoli, art. cit., 135 n. 112.

[128] See Boyce, art. cit., 534-5.

and this probability is strengthened by the fact that, though both feasts continued to be enormously popular in Persia in Zoroastrian times, and were eventually countenanced by the faith, they were never accepted as holy days of obligation, like the seven original feasts of Zoroastrianism (to one of which *Navasarda appears to have been assimilated).

The ceremonial use of an empty chariot

A ceremonial custom of the Persians, attested in Achaemenian times, was to lead in procession an empty chariot drawn by white horses, in which the divinity was evidently invited to station himself invisibly.[129] A similar custom was, it seems, observed in Urartu.[130] In Assyria the chariot which held Assur's image on festive days was drawn by white horses, and white horses to pull the chariot of Ishtar were sent as a gift from Erech to Elam. It has been argued that the custom of regarding white horses as sacred was learnt by Mesopotamians from Iranians (possibly the Mitanni),[131] so that in this case the directions of influence remain uncertain.

Traces of an alien cult

One way in which alien observances were introduced to the Medes and Persians was probably through intermarriages. The great strength and conservatism of the Iranian religious tradition accords with the fact that the Iranians invaded their new lands as a people, men and women together; but whatever happened at lower levels of society, diplomatic unions clearly took place between their leaders and local princely families. Thus in the region of Kharkhar Talta, a king of the Ellipi who died in 708, had a son with the Iranian name of Ispabara, born to him presumably by an Iranian wife;[132] and the most famous of the Median families, that of 'Daiukku', had what seems to be a non-Iranian name, derived perhaps at one stage from a maternal grandfather. Foreign noblewomen must have brought their own beliefs and ways—possibly even their own priests—into Iranian families; and this may explain the discovery of an altar in the oldest building at Tepe Nush-i Jan.[133] The site is in the Hamadan plain, which appears to have been dominated by

[129] See Herodotus VII.40.
[130] See P. Calmeyer, AMI N.F. VII, 1974, 49 ff.
[131] See E. F. Weidner, 'Weisse Pferde im Alten Orient', BiOr IX, 1952, 157-9; G. van Driel, The cult of Aššur, Assen 1969, 163-4.
[132] See LAR II 47, 65; König, Älteste Geschichte, 26.
[133] See M. Roaf and D. Stronach, 'Tepe Nūsh-i Jān 1970: Second Interim Report', Iran XI, 1973, 133-8. Against the interpretation of it as a 'fire altar' see pp. 51-2, below.

the eastern Medes at the date assigned to this building (eighth century B.C.); and so, it is thought, this stronghold must then have been in the possession of a Median chief. The altar stands to one side of a windowless room at the lowest level of a tall, narrow tower. It is a massive structure, about waist-high, made of mud-brick coated with layers of fine white plaster. The shaft is square, surmounted by a four-stepped top, and in this flat top is a shallow cavity, which shows traces of ashes round its raised plaster rim. It seems, therefore, that fire was lit on the altar, perhaps to consume offerings. What cult the altar served is unknown; but possibly the Median chief acted as did Solomon, who built altars 'for all his foreign wives, who burned incense and sacrificed to their gods'.[134]

The fate of this obscure religious sanctuary was a curious one; for it was deliberately put out of use, together with the building above it, though this was structurally still sound.[135] Stones and mud-bricks were carefully packed round the altar, and then the room in which it stood was laboriously filled with shale chips up to a height of about 6 metres (20 ft.), and sealed off with layers of shale and mud. The rooms above were similarly treated; and at the same time a street and open area giving on to the building were blocked off by mud-bricks bonded with shale. Thereafter the site was occupied by squatters, who 'left much late seventh century pottery behind them'.[136] The nature of the sanctuary and its end are thus equally perplexing.

The adoption of an alien symbol

The ancient Iranians themselves using nothing man-made in their worship of the gods—not image or altar or symbol—it seems to have been the fact that the Babylonians, while using all these, linked their great gods also with stars which made possible Iranian assimilation of the cults of Ishtar and Nabū. There was one alien symbol, however, which being (it appears) more a declaration of royal than divine power was perhaps adopted already by the Median Deiocids, though later developments have caused it to be regarded as a characteristic Zoroastrian symbol. This is the winged disk, a symbol which, it is accepted, derived ultimately from Egypt, where it belonged to 'Horus, the sky- and sun-

[134] See I Kings XI.4-8.
[135] See Roaf and Stronach, art. cit., 137.
[136] Stronach and Roaf, Iran XII, 1974, 215. The dating thus given makes it impossible to see here a 'daivadāna' destroyed by Xerxes (so Ghirshman, 'Les Daivadāna', AAH XXIV, 1976, 3-14; Terrasses sacrées, 175-6). In any case, the careful infilling was not destruction, and left no place for the performance instead of the rites of Mazda-worship; cf. below, pp. 174-5.

god who was immanent in Pharaoh and manifest in the form of a falcon'.[137] It first appeared there in the third millennium B.C., and was widely adopted in the lands of the ancient Near East during the second millennium, the time of Egypt's greatest expansion, 'perhaps not so much because it supplied a religious symbol ... as because of a certain display-value which it had received from the immense prestige of the Empire of the Thutmosids ... The winged sun-disk seems to have been considered as a symbol of power and royalty'.[138] A development of the symbol in Assyria shows a human figure with the disk, which as it appears on seals of the ninth century is bearded and crowned, and regularly holds a bow in one hand while raising the other in salutation.[139] It seems probable that, thus modified, the symbol was adopted in Urartu, since it has been found on bronze objects from the region of Lake Van;[140] and it is the Urartian representation which is held most closely to resemble the carving of the symbol on Darius' monument at Behistun, which is the earliest known Iranian example.[141] What significance the Iranians themselves attached to it must be left for consideration in a later chapter.

A modification of the baresman?

In remote times the Indo-Iranian priests had been accustomed to hold in one hand the 'baresman', that is a handful of grasses, while solemnizing certain sacred ceremonies.[142] In time in both Iran and India twigs came to be substituted for the grasses; but in later Zoroastrian usage (as known from the Islamic period) these twigs were quite short,[143] and the metal substitutes now generally used are regularly only about 20 cm (8 ins) in length.

By contrast the baresman shown in Achaemenian (and subsequently Sasanian[144]) art was of impressive size, about 45 cm (1½ ft) long, made up apparently of stiff straight rods. Three representations of men carrying similar bundles of rods have been identified on Assyrian and Urartian objects of the eighth and early seventh centuries;[145] and it seems possible that the magi of western Iran, having come to dwell in a wooded land, allowed themselves to be influenced so far by the cultic usages of their Zagrosian neighbours that they adopted these long rods for their own baresman.[146] A short, stiff baresman appears also to have been used in the Achaemenian period, if the objects are correctly identified which are held by two statuettes in the Treasure of the Oxus;[147] and this usage, it seems, in the end prevailed.

[137] H. Frankfort, Art and Architecture of the Ancient Orient, 117.
[138] H. Frankfort, Cylinder Seals, 208.
[139] See ibid., 210 ff.; van Buren, Symbols, 102 ff.
[140] See Herzfeld, Iran in the Ancient East, 263 with fig. 364; A. Shahbazi, 'An Achaemenid Symbol: I', AMI N.F. VII, 1974, 136; P. Calmeyer, 'Fortuna-Tyche-Khvarnah', JdI 84, 1979, 363-4 with Abb.12.
[141] This is pointed out by Calmeyer, loc. cit.
[142] See HZ I 167.
[143] For a drawing of them see Anquetil du Perron, ZA II Pl. X opp. p. 532.
[144] For a Sasanian example see, e.g., Survey IV, Pl. 160 A. The Achaemenian ones are discussed later in the present book, see pp. 146-8, 276.

Conclusion

The surviving evidence thus suggests that the religion of the ancient Medes and Persians was essentially the same as that of the ancient 'Avestan' people; and the ethical Ahuras appear to have dominated their pantheon also and to have received great devotion. The western Iranians evidently resisted in general the influence of their new neighbours in both beliefs and observances, since they continued to worship their own gods in their own traditional ways; but Mesopotamian religion and learning had some impact on them, notably through the stellar cults of Nabū and Ishtar. There was nothing in such alien influences, however, to disturb their basic outlook on life, for the Akkadians, like the ancient Iranians, believed the world in its present state, ruled over by the gods, to be stable and enduring. Zoroaster's revolutionary teachings of a Last Day, universal judgment, and the kingdom of God to come upon earth, are likely therefore to have been as strange and disturbing to the Medes and Persians when they first heard them as they had been to his own people when the prophet imparted his revelation centuries earlier on the northern steppes; and their resistance is likely to have been no less strong.[148]

[145] See P. Calmeyer, 'Barsombündel im 8. und 7. Jahrhundert v. Chr.', Wandlungen, Studien zur antiken und neueren Kunst E. Homann-Wedeking gewidmet, Waldsassen-Bayern 1975, 11-5. The examples which he cites are those published by R. D. Barnett, Survey XIV (1967) 3002 fig. 1063; H. J. Kellner, Situla (Ljubljana) 1974, 14/15, 50 Taf. 3; and C. Lehmann-Haupt, Armenien Einst und Jetzt I, 1910, 261 (Abb.), cf. M. van Loon, Urartian Art, 1966, 153 f., fig. 18 E 5.
[146] Against, conversely, the repeated attempts to find the Zoroastrian 'baresman' in Ezekiel VIII.17 see, conclusively, R. Gordis, 'The Branch to the Nose', J. of Theological Studies XXXVII, 1936, 284-8.
[147] See Dalton, Treasure of the Oxus, 1 with Pl. II.1, 2 with Pl. XIII.2; Survey I 352 with Figs 82, 85 and IV Pl. 108 D.
[148] Cf. HZ I 250 ff.

CHAPTER THREE

THE SPREAD OF ZOROASTRIANISM IN WESTERN IRAN

During the latter part of the seventh century

Zoroastrianism, which had probably won its bridgehead in Raga even before the era of the Deiocids, is likely to have gained converts more rapidly among the Medes and Persians during the latter part of the seventh century, when they were witness to the ruthless slaughter and destruction in the kingdom of Susa, and suffered themselves for almost a generation from the ravages of the Scythians. A time of such harshness and anarchy must have inclined men to listen to a message of hope, telling of justice and peace in a new age to come, to be ushered in by a World Saviour; and repudiation of the warlike Daevas may well have seemed easier in face of the Scythians' ceaseless marauding, with all the misery which this brought.

The religion of the Scythians

Herodotus' account of the Scythians' own religion is not easily to be understood, since he presents the gods of their worship under Greek names, with only occasionally some puzzling Scythian equivalents;[1] but from it it appears that their faith was essentially the general Old Iranian one, with, cultically, veneration paid 'in especial' to the hearth fire (Hestia), and carried out without images, altars or temples. The Greek historian records one unusual rite, however, practised by the Scythians in honour of a god of war. In each locality an iron sword—the most powerful weapon of the day—was planted in a mound of brushwood; and to these swords, he says, 'they bring yearly sacrifice of sheep and goats and horses, offering to these symbols even more than they do to the other gods. Of all their enemies that they take alive, they sacrifice one man in every hundred'.[2] The war-god thus honoured Herodotus identifies as Ares; and he elsewhere mentions a Herakles, without providing either name with a Scythian equivalent. In the Hellenistic period

[1] IV.59 ff. On his account see J. Marquart, Untersuchungen zur Geschichte von Iran II, Leipzig 1905, 90; M. Vasmer, Untersuchungen über die ältesten Wohnsitze der Slaven I: Die Iranier in Südrussland, Leipzig 1923, 7 ff. (a reference I owe to the kindness of Dr. P. Calmeyer); E. H. Minns, CAH III, 204; Nyberg, Rel., 253-6.

[2] IV.62.

Herakles was regularly equated with Iranian Verethraghna; and it is possible that the Scythian Ares was mighty Indra, who for Zoroastrians was the chief of the warlike, amoral Daevas, and a very fitting deity to receive worship from the freebooting Scythians.

In the Achaemenian family (c. 600 +)

The nature of the scanty surviving records brings it about that the earliest direct proof of the presence of Zoroastrianism in western Iran comes from proper names in a royal family, that of the Persian Achaemenians.[3] The Achaemenians were still at this period vassals of the Deiocids, although we have met Cyrus (Kuruš) I of Anshan sending an independent embassy to Assurbanipal in 639. This king had a younger cousin Arsames (Aršāma), who probably flourished about 600; and Arsames called one of his sons by the name of Zoroaster's patron, Vištāspa (Greek Hystaspes), using its Avestan form (the Old Persian one would have been *Vištāsa).[4] This royal name remained rare in western Iran, being recorded sporadically thereafter only in the Achaemenian family itself.[5] In the next generation of that family Cyrus the Great, grandson of the first Cyrus, called his eldest daughter 'Atossa', a name generally interpreted as the Greek rendering of Hutaosā, that of Kavi Vištāspa's queen.[6] Thereafter Avestan names recur in the Persian royal family. Thus Darius (Dārayavahu) the Great, son of Vištāspa, called one of his sons by his father's name; and this second Vištāspa had, significantly, a son called Pissouthnes, a rendering, it seems, of Pišišyaothna. The original bearer of this Avestan name was regarded in Zoroastrian tradition as one of Kavi Vištāspa's sons.[7]

This group of family names, taken together, thus provides evidence that members of both branches of the Achaemenian royal house had accepted Zoroastrianism by the early sixth century B.C., and wished

[3] These names are recorded in the genealogies given in the OP inscriptions (see Kent, Old Persian, 158), and by Greek historians.

[4] This point is not, however, a cogent one by itself, since all recorded Persian names containing the element 'horse' in the Achaemenian period have the Avestan/Median form *aspa*, not *asa*, see R. Schmitt, 'Persepolitanisches I', Die Sprache XVIII, 1972, 51.

[5] See Justi, Namenbuch, 372-3. The popularity of the name Guštāsp among Zoroastrians in later times seems to have been inspired by the Shahname. Repeated attempts have been made to see in the name ku-uš-ta-aš-pi, recorded in the annals of Tiglath-Pileser III as that of an 8th-century king of Kummukh (Commagene), a form of Iranian Vištāspa, but these have been as often rejected, see lastly M. Mayrhofer, 'Ein altes Problem: "Guštāsp" im achten vorchristlichen Jahrhundert?' Mon. Nyberg II, Acta Iranica 5, 53-7.

[6] So first Spiegel, EA I 700 n. 2. Cf. Lommel, Rel., 16, and see latterly R. Schmitt, 'Medisches und persisches Sprachgut bei Herodot', ZDMG 117, 1967, 136 n.136.

[7] See Justi, Namenbuch, 253-4. The fravaši of Pišišyaothna is invoked in Yt XIII.103 after that of Spentōdāta, Kavi Vištāspa's son.

to declare their allegiance to it publicly. The question then arises as to how the faith had reached them. Archaeological discoveries in Seistan,[8] and the ancient epics of Sumer,[9] show that there were pre-historic trade-links between Anshan and eastern Iran; and it has been suggested that the Achaemenians themselves were a clan of eastern Iranian origin, who perhaps joined the Persians in the south-west only in the eighth century B.C.[10] The proselytizing of Pars from Drangiana-Arachosia, a region with a strong and ancient Zoroastrian tradition,[11] would thus seem possible; and indeed some evidence for an early religious connection with that area has been found in the dialectology of the surviving Avestan texts.[12] This, however, may be due to these texts having been committed to writing in Pars during the Sasanian period, partly at the dictation of eastern Iranian priests; for, despite all the above considerations, it still seems more probable that the Persians received Zoroastrianism through Median mediation, hence through Raga from north-eastern Iran. This is because, although they eventually gained dominance over the Medes, and although their priests were evidently full of religious zeal during both the Achaemenian and Sasanian periods, the Persians always acknowledged the claim of the Medes to the greater antiquity and authority of their Zoroastrian tradition, and never fabricated (as did other major regions of Iran [13]) an independent claim of their own to possess the holy places of the faith.

The Achaemenians evidently had close contact with the Deiocids, as their oldest and nearest royal vassals; and Cyrus the Great is said by Herodotus to have been married to Mandana, daughter of Astyages. There is no difficulty, therefore, in supposing that they learnt their Zoroastrianism from Median sources. Missionary influences emanating from Raga may have been reinforced at this period, as we have seen, by diplomatic marriages contracted with eastern Iranian princesses,[14] and it was perhaps one such marriage which led to the giving of the first

[8] See, with further references, the papers of L. Costantini, S. Durante, M. Piperno, S. Salvatori and M. Tosi in SAA 1977 (ed. M. Taddei), Naples 1979, Vol. I.

[9] See, with references, J. Hansman, 'The question of Aratta', JNES XXXVII, 1978, 331-6.

[10] See J. Harmatta, 'The rise of the Old Persian Empire, Cyrus the Great', AAH XIX, 1971, 2-15 and cf. Herzfeld, Zoroaster I, 91-2.

[11] See HZ I index s.v. Drangiana, Seistan. In Time and Homeland Gnoli again expounds his conviction that the faith was established there in the lifetime of Zarathuštra himself, but the writer still finds his arguments, although learnedly urged, impossible to accept, cf. above, Ch.1 n. 10. For Persia's later links with Seistan cf. below, p. 279.

[12] See K. Hoffmann, 'Das Avesta in der Persis', Prolegomena to the Sources on the History of Pre-Islamic Central Asia, ed. J. Harmatta, Budapest 1979, 89-93.

[13] I.e. Bactria, Sogdia, Parthia, Drangiana/Arachosia.

[14] Cf. above, p. 13.

Avestan name, Hystaspes/Vištāspa, among the Achaemenians. Conceivably it was also this eastern family tie which caused the Persian Vištāspa to be appointed eventually to be governor of the eastern regions of Parthia and Hyrcania.

The major political event in western Iran in the sixth century was the successful rebellion by Cyrus against Astyages, leading to the establishment of a Persian Empire in succession to the Median one; and a remarkable feature of that rebellion was that Cyrus was actively supported by members of the Median nobility, who thereby brought about the subordination of their own people to the Persians. The folkloric tale by which Herodotus accounts for this carries little conviction;[15] and evidence of religious and political propaganda made beforehand on Cyrus' behalf suggests that one of the main causes may have been that Astyages held to the Old Iranian faith of his forefathers, whereas Cyrus put himself forward as a champion of Zoroastrianism, and so attracted support from adherents of the eastern religion among Medes as well as Persians.

Religious and political propaganda on behalf of Cyrus in Babylon

Cyrus became king in Anshan, it seems, in 558 B.C., and it was not until 550 that he finally defeated Astyages in battle. During the intervening years there is evidence of propaganda on his behalf in Babylonia, once more a great power after Assyria's downfall. Thus an oracle composed probably in 553, and delivered to king Nabonidus, contains a prophecy concerning the 'Umman-Manda', in this context the Medes: 'The Umman-Manda of whom you spoke, he himself [i.e. Astyages], his land and the kings who march beside him, shall be no more. In the third year, when it arrives, they [i.e. the gods of Babylon] have caused Cyrus, king of Anzan, to arise against him, his petty vassal with his small army; he will overcome the farflung Umman-Manda, and will take him in bonds to his own land'.[16] This is held to be genuine prophecy, not *ex eventu*; and it suggests that there were skilful Persian propagandists at work among the priests of Babylon who had convinced them of the success of Cyrus' planned uprising.

Striking testimony to the religious import of some of their propaganda comes from the verses of Second Isaiah, that is, from chapters 40-48 of the Book of Isaiah, generally held to be the work of an anonymous

[15] I.107 ff., especially 120 ff., 129.

[16] See Sidney Smith, Isaiah, 32-3.

poet-prophet of the Captivity.[17] Second Isaiah speaks joyfully to his fellow Jewish exiles of the deliverance which is to come for them through Cyrus, whom Yahweh, god of Israel, addresses thus by his mouth: 'You shall be my shepherd to carry out all my purposes, so that Jerusalem may be rebuilt and the foundations of the temple may be laid. Thus says Yahweh to Cyrus his annointed, Cyrus whom he has taken by the hand to subdue nations before him and undo the might of kings; before whom gates shall be opened and no doors be shut; I will go before you and level the swelling hills; I will break down gates of bronze and hack through iron bars. I will give you treasures from dark vaults, hoarded in secret places, that you may know that I am Yahweh, Israel's God who calls you by name. For the sake of Jacob my servant and Israel my chosen I have called you by name and given you your title, though you have not known me' (44.28-45.4). Further, Yahweh declares through the prophet to the Jews: 'I alone have roused this man [i.e. Cyrus] in righteousness and I will smooth his path before him; he shall rebuild my city and let my exiles go free' (45.13).

To this message of hope, Second Isaiah joined a prophecy of degradation and woe for Babylon, concerning which Yahweh proclaims to the Jews: 'He whom I love [i.e. Cyrus] shall wreak my will on Babylon, and the Chaldeans shall be scattered' (47.14). 'I will lay the Chaldeans prostrate as they flee, and their cry of triumph will turn to groaning' (43.14). The prophet dwells at length on the coming sufferings of the Jews' oppressors; but such prophecies do not accord with the fact that in the end Cyrus made a bloodless entry into Babylon, and ruled mildly as its accepted king. Second Isaiah also foretells that the 'toilers of Egypt and Nubian merchants' will submit to the Persian (45.14), and this likewise was not to be. These false predictions have led scholars to conclude that the Jewish prophet, like the Babylonian priests, was indeed foretelling the uncertain future when he composed his utterances.

The verses of Second Isaiah are remarkable in that in them alone, out of all the Old Testament, the term 'messiah', in the sense of an annointed deliverer of the Jewish nation, is used of a foreigner, a non-Jew.[17a] This

[17] This generally accepted view is, however, challenged by some Old Testament scholars. For a survey of the literature on the subject see fairly recently J. M. Vincent, Studien zur literarischen Eigenart und zur geistigen Heimat von Jesaja, Kap. 40-55, Frankfurt am Main 1977, who himself argues that the whole text is to be connected with cultic rather than historical events.

[17a] The unusualness of the usage has given rise to a considerable literature concerning it. For a bibliography see Vincent, op. cit., 255 n.4. Vincent himself adopted a theory that the name of Cyrus was simply used as that of an ideal type of victorious 'Heilskönig', and suggested that the verses in question were composed in Jerusalem during the reign of Darius the Great, when the Persian King of kings became, in his words, the 'Kultherr' of the rebuilt Temple. But, apart from other

in itself appears a measure of the exalted trust in Cyrus which the unknown Persian propagandist had instilled in the prophet. To this striking usage Second Isaiah joins startlingly original theological utterances; and what seems to have been new and unfamiliar in these for Jewish ears is markedly Zoroastrian in character—so much so that parallels have been drawn between it and one of Zoroaster's own Gathas.[18] Concerning these parallels the scholar who remarked them has observed: 'There is little absolute novelty in theological thought, so it is rarely possible to point out the absolutely first occurrence of any important idea, even in the preserved material, or to explain many chance and isolated occurrences. What can be seen clearly and what does require historical explanation is the way in which certain ideas, formerly sporadic and unimportant, suddenly find frequent expression and are made the central concerns of important works. A notorious case of this is the history of the notion that Yahweh created the world. In the preserved works of Hebrew literature it plays no conspicuous role in those which can be dated by conclusive demonstration before the time of II Isaiah. (As everyone knows, the dating of Genesis I and of the Psalms is a matter of dispute; they may be later than II Isaiah.) The notion does occur in occasional prophetic passages . . ., but such occasional occurrences merely render conspicuous the prophets' usual neglect of the subject. Then suddenly it becomes one of the main themes of II Is. 40-48. But it was not necessary to II Isaiah's primary purpose, which was to prepare the Judeans for their proximate deliverance and convince them that it was Yahweh who would deliver them. For this, all that was needed in the deity was sufficient power to perform the acts proposed. Of course, II Isaiah's conception of Yahweh as the sole, omnipotent creator God gave absolute assurance to his announcement of the impending deliverance, but it was not necessary to that announcement and cannot be derived from it. His immediate predecessor, Ezekiel, would have made the same announcement without any such cosmological framework. It is true that when presenting this idea II Isaiah several times suggests that it was no new doctrine, but one with which his readers should have been familiar from of old (40.12, 28 etc.). But innovators often claim antiquity for their innovations . . . And the insistence with which II Isaiah returns to

considerations, it runs against probability, and all the Iranian evidence, to suppose that Darius would have been gratified by a eulogy of any king but himself. Vincent cites in support of his theory Ezra VI.10, but this in fact actually weakens his case, since what is required there by a later Great King is a normal prayer for the welfare of the ruling sovereign.

[18] See Morton Smith, 'II Isaiah and the Persians', JAOS 83, 1963, 415-21.

this doctrine again and again indicates that he expected it to be unfamiliar to his hearers and not readily accepted or even understood by them'.[19]

The particular Gatha which provides striking parallels for Second Isaiah is Yasna 44. This is formed as a series of questions addressed to Ahura Mazda, each with an expected answer of 'I am' or 'I do'. 'Not only is the use of such rhetorical questions a conspicuous peculiarity of the style of II Isaiah, but almost all of those particular questions which make up the cosmological part of the Gatha (vss. 3-5) are either asked or answered in II Isaiah, with Yahweh taking the place of Ahura Mazda'.[20] Thus Y 44.3.1-2: 'This I ask Thee, tell me truly, Lord, who in the beginning, at creation, was the father of justice?' is echoed by Is. 45.8: 'Rain justice, you heavens . . . this I, Yahweh, have created.' For Y 44.3. 3-5: 'Who established the course of sun and stars? Through whom does the moon wax, then wane?' there is Is. 40.26: 'Lift up your eyes to the heavens; consider who created it all, led out their host one by one.' Y 44.4.1-4 runs: 'Who has upheld the earth from below and the heavens from falling? Who (sustains) the waters and plants? Who yoked swift (steeds) to the wind and clouds?'; and it is matched by Is. 40.12, 44.24: 'Who has gauged the waters in the palm of his hand, or with its span set limits to the heavens? . . . I am Yahweh who made all things, by myself I stretched out the skies, alone I hammered out the floor of the earth.' Further, the question to Ahuramazda, Lord of Wisdom, in Y 44. 4.5: 'Who, O Mazda, is the Creator of good thought?' has for counterpart Is. 40.13: 'With whom did [Yahweh] confer to gain discernment? Who taught him how to do justice or gave him lessons in wisdom?'; and the demand in Y 44.5.1-3: 'What craftsman made light and darkness?' is matched by Is. 45.7: 'I am Yahweh, there is no other; I make the light, I create darkness'.

These parallels, it is pointed out, 'hardly suffice to suggest literary dependence of II Isaiah on Yasna 44. But they do suggest relationship to the same tradition';[21] and, given the time and circumstances, this tradition would appear to be the teachings of Zoroaster. That Ahuramazda is the Creator of all things good is a major Zoroastrian doctrine, and 'Creator' is his most constant title, which on occasion replaces his proper name. It would seem, therefore, that Cyrus' agent stressed in his subversive talks with the Jewish prophet the majesty and might of his

[19] Ibid., 418-19.

[20] Ibid., 419. The Gatha translations given here owe most to the rendering of Insler, The Gathas. The parallels are taken from those drawn by Morton Smith, who goes in more detail into correspondences.

[21] Morton Smith, loc.cit.

Lord, Ahuramazda, and his power to work wonders through his chosen instrument, Cyrus; and that Second Isaiah, rooted in the traditions of his own people, accepted the message of hope and the new concept of God, but saw the Supreme Being in his own terms as Yahweh.

It is moreover reasonable to suppose that the agent in this case was a magus, one of the learned men of Iran, who could travel to Babylon in ostensible quest for knowledge, and hold discussions there with a man of religion such as Second Isaiah without arousing suspicion. A magus who knew the Gathic teachings must have been a Zoroastrian; and the fact that he was evidently ardently and dangerously active in the cause of Cyrus seems good evidence that the Persian king was not only a believer, but one committed to establishing the faith throughout his realms if he could overthrow Astyages, an undertaking for which he needed the acquiescence of powerful neighbouring kingdoms.

Religious and political propaganda on behalf of Cyrus in Ionia

The Persian propagandists who thus succeeded in inspiring both Second Isaiah and the Babylonian priests with confidence in Cyrus clearly used a variety of effective approaches; and there is some evidence for the activity of yet other skilful and learned propagandists for the Persian king in Asia Minor. The cosmological teachings of Anaximander of Miletus (who seems to have flourished just before Cyrus' armies conquered Ionia) have been held to show marked Zoroastrian influences.[22] These the philosopher assimilated to his own Greek tradition, as Second Isaiah assimilated such influences to his Jewish one; and the probability appears that he in his turn encountered a Zoroastrian priest, one sojourning in Miletus, the metropolis of Ionia—again a case of one man of faith and learning seeking out another. A scrap of supporting evidence for the presence of Cyrus' agents in the region survives in the indication that the invading Persians subsequently received a favourable oracle from priests of an Apollo-shrine near Magnesia on the Meander. This helpful act Cyrus rewarded generously with a grant of perpetual privileges in the form of exemption from tax and forced labour. The grant is known from the reproduction of a letter written about half a century later by Darius the Great to Gadatas, his satrap in those parts, whom he reproaches 'in that you do not respect my disposition with regard to the gods . . . For you have exacted tribute from the sacred gardeners of Apollo, and have forced them to cultivate profane ground, ignoring the

[22] See, e.g., M. L. West, Early Greek Philosophy and the Orient, 76 ff. The question of Zoroastrianism and the early Ionian thinkers is considered in more detail in Ch.9, below.

intention of my ancestors towards the god who told the Persians the true course of events.'[23] The 'ancestors' thus referred to, it has been pointed out,[24] can only in fact be Cyrus (whom Darius never chooses to name, except in genealogies, in any of his recorded utterances).

Propagandists in Ionia in the Deiocid era are more likely (for geographical reasons) to have been Medes than Persians; and the data suggest that they too were Zoroastrian magi, presumably in enforced or voluntary exile, remote from the wrath of Astyages. The imprint of Zoroastrian doctrines on the works of both Second Isaiah and Anaximander shows that these priestly agents were well instructed in the theology of their faith; and it is likely that they were gifted as well as bold men, able to talk persuasively in Aramaic and Greek, and concerned to sway political events in order to gain recognition for the religion they served. As so often in the history of Zoroastrianism, developments within Iran itself have to be deduced from the ripples which they caused abroad; but the widespread activities of Cyrus' agents undoubtedly suggest the growing strength of Zoroastrianism among the Medes and Persians in the mid sixth century B.C., and the energy and determination of its adherents.

[23] Translation following that of Sidney Smith, Isaiah, 41. For the text, with German transl. and a bibliography, see F. Lochner-Hüttenbach apud Brandenstein-Mayrhofer, Hb.d. Altp., 91-8. He proposes to identify the god of the final sentence with Ahuramazda, and translates the rare word *atrékeia* (rendered above as 'true course of events', see his p. 97) by 'Rechtsordnung', seeking to connect it with *aša*. Smith, loc.cit., argues cogently for the original grant having been made simply in recognition of a valuable service by the Ionian priests, 'the god' being therefore their god, to whom the oracle was attributed. So also Clemen, Nachrichten, 75.

[24] Smith, loc.cit.

CHAPTER FOUR

CYRUS THE GREAT (550-530 B.C.)

The campaigns of conquest

In 550 Cyrus defeated Astyages in battle, probably on the plain of Pasargadae, in the north of Pars.[1] The Median general Harpagos went over to him with a large part of the Median army. Astyages was captured, and the victorious Persians pressed on to sack the Deiocid capital of Ecbatana. After the first flush of victory, however, Cyrus set himself to rule as king of the Medes and Persians. Ecbatana remained a royal residence, Median nobles had prominent places at his court, and Median generals commanded his armies; and the subsequent history of Zoroastrianism suggests that those Median magi who had embraced the faith had a leading part, together with their Persian fellow-priests, in the religious life of the new empire.

However sincerely Cyrus may have wished to achieve power in order to establish Zoroastrianism as the religion of state, he was clearly driven also by vast territorial ambitions. For the next two years, it seems, he had to fight to subdue the kingdoms of the Iranian plateau which had been subject to Astyages.[2] Then he turned westward and by 546, having crossed the Halys, had conquered Lydia and most of Ionia.[3] Strabo records a tradition that the great Persian temple at Zela in Pontus had its origin in a sanctuary created in thanksgiving during these Asia Minor campaigns. This sanctuary was originally, he says, an artifical mound encircled by a wall—a man-made hill, not a building, which presumably priests and worshippers ascended for sacrifice and prayer.[4] From this time onwards, for well over a millennium, there was a Zoroastrian presence in Asia Minor; and much of what is recorded about the ancient observances of the faith comes from that relatively well-documented region.

Thereafter Cyrus turned eastward, and between 545 and 539 made

[1] See Strabo XV.3.8, and further, with references, Dandamaev, Persien, 94.

[2] See Herodotus I.177.

[3] Ibid., I.46 ff.

[4] Strabo, XI.8.4, 5. Strabo adds that in thanksgiving Cyrus consecrated the day of victory (it is said over 'Sacae', presumably, that is, Saka settlers) 'to the goddess of his fathers', and founded a festival, called the Sacaea, which 'wherever there is a temple of this goddess' was celebrated annually thereafter with Baccanalian rites. The goddess in question is said elsewhere to have been 'Anaitis', who in later times was to have many temples. Cf. below, p. 119.

himself master of all the eastern Iranian kingdoms, and some Indian borderlands as well.[5] He thus became the ruler of a number of old Zoroastrian communities. Finally came his richest conquest, Babylonia, many of whose citizens were awaiting him as a deliverer—not only groups of political exiles, worked upon by his agents (of whom the Jews were but one), but also the powerful priesthood of Marduk, deeply resentful of the conduct of the reigning king, Nabonidus. In 539—a date which was to be memorable in the annals of the Near East—Cyrus invaded the land, marched through it, and finally entered the great city of Babylon itself without resistance or bloodshed. The western territories of the Babylonian empire—Syria and Palestine to the borders of Egypt—submitted to him voluntarily; and he also occupied Susa to the east, and so at last completed the Persian domination of Elam.[6]

Pasargadae and its monuments

The Achaemenian Empire, succeeding those of the Assyrians and Medes, and in many ways heir to both, was far larger than either. The Persians now ruled over many kingdoms and peoples, and it was natural that Cyrus should seek to build for himself a new and fittingly majestic capital. The site which he chose was Pasargadae; and for the task he brought together an army of workmen, among them master-masons and stone-cutters from Ionia and Lydia, and sculptors from Babylon.[7] Pasargadae was added to by later Achaemenian kings; but the original buildings of the time of Cyrus are distinguished by the excellence of the stonework, and certain technical details, such as the use of contrasting elements of white and black stone (ultimately possibly of Urartian inspiration),[8] and the lack of marks from the toothed chisel (later a favourite mason's tool).[9]

The palaces of Cyrus were set amid gardens and orchards within a walled precinct on the plain; and the ruins have been identified of a monumental gateway, an audience hall and a private palace. The last two had pillared halls flanked by columned porticoes; and these imposing structures, created with no thought or need for defence, contrast strikingly with the old fortified manor-houses of the tribal period, which

[5] See Dandamaev, op. cit., 95; and on Cyrus in India further, e.g., E. Lamotte, Histoire du Buddhisme indien, Louvain 1958, 111-2.

[6] See p. 22 n.50, with Stronach, Pasargadae, 293.

[7] See Nylander, Ionians in Pasargadae; Stronach, op. cit., 20-3, 72-3, 84-5, 104-5.

[8] See Nylander, op. cit., 142-3; Herzfeld, Archaeological History of Iran, 17; van Loon, Urartian Art, 52.

[9] See Nylander, op. cit., 53-6; Stronach, op. cit., 99-100.

(with the disappearance of Deiocid Ecbatana) are the only earlier Iranian buildings yet known.[10]

The fire-holders

One of the features of a Median manor-house had been the hall, the centre of its life. Here presumably (as in the great houses of medieval Europe) the lord and his people sat, and meals were cooked at the wide hearth, which would have given out a comfortable warmth on winter days and nights. Even through the summer the fire would have burned there continually, blanketed when not needed under a layer of ash; and three times a day, in the pagan period, it would have received the ritual offerings. The intention of these offerings was to gratify Ātar, the god of fire; and they could be made accordingly by any adult member of the household who was in a state of ritual purity.[11] The great innovation made in this ancient cult by Zoroaster had been to appoint fire as the symbol of righteousness, before which every member of his community should pray five times a day; and down the ages in Zoroastrian households family devotions have duly taken place by the hearthside each day at the established times.

In the lofty palaces of Pasargadae there seems to have been no place for a fixed hearth, and no need for a domestic source of warmth; for the new King of kings could readily escape the cold winters of the plateau by moving with his court to one of his lowland capitals—Susa or Babylon. Yet the duty of prayer before fire is encumbent on all Zoroastrians, and cannot be performed vicariously; and it would plainly have been indecorous for him to visit the palace kitchens—the only place in royal Pasargadae where fire would have had a practical function. How this problem was solved is shown by the remains of elegant fire-holders, discovered as surface-finds at the site.

These fire-holders were carved of white stone, with the fine workmanship of the early Pasargadae period;[12] and fragments of two or possibly three of them have been found at three places in the south-west corner of the plain. From these fragments the fire-holders can be reconstructed as consisting of a three-stepped top and base, joined by a slender square shaft. The whole probably stood about 112 cm. (3 ft. 8 ins.) high; and in the top, harmoniously balanced by the solid base, a bowl was hollowed out, 33 cm. (13 ins.) deep—deep enough, that is, to hold a

[10] See pp. 6-7, above.

[11] See HZ I 154-5.

[12] See Stronach, op. cit., 141 with fig. 72 and Pl. 107; and earlier, with more details, 'Urartian and Achaemenian Tower Temples', JNES XXVI, 1967, 287.

thick bed of hot ash, such as is needed to sustain an ever-burning fire of wood. (Only fine wood-ash can remain hot in an enclosed container such as this, and needs no draught of air to preserve its warmth; but lacking such depth of ash, a wood-fire soon goes out.) These fire-holders thus held a fire raised up to a little above waist-height for an average man, before which a king could pray accordingly with dignity. Such a fire is unlikely to have been put to any practical use, but was presumably tended by the king's priests purely for this devotional purpose. Where the fire-holders originally stood is a matter for conjecture; but one can surmise that one was set in each of the palaces, or that one perhaps stood in the king's quarters, another in those of his queens.[13]

The fire-holders of Pasargadae, although unique in the fineness of their workmanship, are in design the first known examples of many such objects used in Zoroastrian worship down the centuries. No name is recorded for these before the Sasanian period, when they are called by several prosaically descriptive ones, all meaning simply a place or container for fire.[14] The term 'fire-altar' was applied to them by Western scholars; but the Zoroastrian fire-holder is not an altar in the sense of a 'raised structure with a plane surface, on which to place or sacrifice offerings to a deity',[15] but is simply a stand with hollow top, made to elevate fire for devotional purposes. Yet it is very likely that the inspiration for making such a stand came from the altars of other faiths. A cylinder seal of the Neo-Assyrian period has been found at Persepolis, which shows an altar with a three-stepped top and base;[16] and a connection with the Pasargadae ones has also been sought in the mud-brick altar at Tepe Nush-e Jan, with its four-stepped top but plain base.[17] The choice of three steps would be characteristically Zoroastrian, for the sacred number three runs through all the rituals and observances of the faith;[18] and it is probable that there were other links in the chain of such connections, with perhaps an intermediary form made of mud-brick with a metal bowl inset in the hollow top (for mud-brick would crack from continual direct heat[19]). Probably a metal fire-bowl was used also with

[13] Stronach was himself inclined to connect them with funerary rites, because of their discovery in the south-west corner of the plain where the tomb of Cyrus stands, and because of the appearance of similar fire-holders in the carvings over the tombs of later Achaemenians.

[14] I.e. ādoxš, ādurdān, ātašdān, ātašgāh.

[15] The definition of 'altar' in the Oxford English Dictionary.

[16] PT5 791, see Schmidt, Persepolis II, 45 with Pl. 16.

[17] See Stronach, op. cit., 141-2.

[18] See HZ I index s.v. 'three'.

[19] In Zoroastrian usage of the Islamic period, when mud-brick fire-holders were general, a metal bowl was regularly set in the hollow top to hold the fire. The fire-holder itself then showed no trace of ash (as does the altar at Nūsh-i Jān).

the stone fire-holders of Pasargadae, for these show no signs of charring. This might have had cultic as well as practical advantages, since such an arrangement means that a fire can readily be moved. Somewhere there must have burnt Cyrus' personal fire, that is, the hearth-fire which was lit in Anshan when he succeeded his father there; and it is conceivable that this was carried with him in his royal progresses from palace to palace.

This development, of elevating in dignity a fire which was then used solely as an icon for prayer, and which, becoming consecrated by those prayers, never had its purity threatened by being put to practical use, was clearly one of great importance in the history of Zoroastrian observance.

The plinths and sacred precinct

At some distance from the palace ruins, to the north-west, two impressive plinths still stand side by side on the plain.[20] Both are set on solid stone foundations, and are themselves made of finely worked white limestone. The more elaborate one consists of a hollow stone block about 2.16 m. (7 ft.) high, and 2.43 m. (7 ft. 11 ins.) square at the base. This probably once had a three-tiered black limestone cap, which was balanced at ground level by a highly-polished black limestone border. This border enclosed both the plinth itself and a set of stone steps by which it could be ascended.

On the north side of this plinth, and a little distance away, was its companion, slightly lower and wider—2.10 m. (6 ft. 10 ins.) high with a base 2.80 m. (9 ft. 2 ins.) square. Its hollow central plinth was made of at least three stones, instead of one, but it too probably had a black limestone capping, although there is no trace of steps beside it. The fine workmanship of the plinths, the use of contrasting black and white stone, and the lack of toothed-chisel marks, make it certain that they belong to the time of Cyrus. They are unique structures, which means that their purpose cannot be precisely determined; but presumably they were made to enable the Great King to perform religious rites in the open with fitting solemnity. It seems likely that he ascended the taller plinth by its stone steps; but it is vain to speculate further on the actual ceremonies which he performed there, or the use of the second plinth.

To the west of the plinths, just over 120 m. (131 yards) away, there is a natural outcrop of rock which was made the basis for a series of terraces, built up by dry-stone walls with paved areas in between.[21]

[20] See Stronach, op. cit., 138-41, with Pls 103-6.

[21] See ibid., 142-3.

The fifth and uppermost terrace was simply a carefully built mud-brick platform. The terraces were reached, it seems, by two stairways, and were apparently made for people to witness from them the ceremonies performed at the plinths.[22] Both the plinths, and the terraced mound, were enclosed within a large precinct by a dry-stone wall; but there is no means of dating closely either the wall or the terraces, and they may have been the work of later Achaemenian kings.

The tomb of Cyrus

On the other side of the palace area from the sacred precinct, in the south-west corner of the plain, there still stands the tomb which Cyrus had built for himself, and in which his body was to lie until after Alexander's conquest.[23] The monument is one of noble simplicity, and consists of a stone tomb-chamber with gabled roof, set high upon a plinth of solid stone composed of six receding tiers. The three lower tiers are deeper than the upper ones, so that the monument is divided into three parts [24]—once again the Zoroastrian sacred number, which is regularly prominent in funerary rites.[25]

Much has been written about this tomb, which was among the first monuments to be described by European travellers to Persia; and many attempts have been made to find antecedents for its various elements, from the tombs of Lydia to the ziggurats of Elam.[26] It is agreed, however, that whatever may have been the sources of its inspiration, the tomb itself appears unique (except for one humbler copy made of it thereafter, perhaps as the sepulchre of the younger Cyrus [27]). It constitutes, moreover, the first burial place known of a Zoroastrian king; and it is one of the perplexities in the ill-documented history of that faith that although its scriptures prescribe the rite of exposure of the dead, and although this rite came to be generally practised in both western and eastern Iran, yet the bodies of kings of all three Zoroastrian dynasties were embalmed at death and laid in sepulchres of stone or living rock. The precedent for this anomalous procedure is presumably to be sought with Cyrus himself. Archaeological discoveries, as we have seen,[28] show

[22] L. Trümpelmann, 'Das Heiligtum von Pasargadae', Studia Iranica VI, 1977, 7-16, sees the mound as being itself a place of worship.

[23] On the tomb see Stronach, op. cit., 24-43, with Pls 19-39.

[24] See ibid., 29, 43.

[25] This is true also of the old religion, see HZ I 121 (where the word 'chthonic' should be read instead of 'catholic', substituted for it in the press).

[26] For bibliographies see Nylander, op. cit., 91-102; Stronach, op. cit., 29 ff.

[27] I.e. the tomb at Buzpar in the Zagros mountains. On it and the apparently unfinished copy of the tomb of Cyrus called Takht-i Rustam, near Persepolis, see below, pp. 112, 210.

[28] Above, pp. 25-6.

with what care the Medes of the old religion had disposed of their dead by burial; and in this practice they and the Persians received every encouragement from the example of their Near Eastern neighbours, especially with regard to the bodies of kings, whose bones were venerated. Thus when, for example, a king of Elam fled before an invasion of his land by Sennacherib, he carried away to safety not only the statues of his gods but 'the bones of his fathers who lived before him';[29] and this with good reason, for later when Assurbanipal ravaged Elam he marked its overthrow by plundering the sepulchres of its kings. 'Their bones I carried off to Assyria', he recorded, 'I laid restlessness upon their shades. I deprived them of food-offerings and libations of water'.[30] And of a fallen prince he stated vengefully: 'I did not give him to be buried. I made him more dead than he was before'.[31]

The belief that the spirits of the dead rest quietly only if their bodies receive burial has been widespread among the peoples of the world; and although surprisingly little is known of the actual burial of Mesopotamian kings, Herodotus tells us that the Babylonians embalmed their dead.[32] The Scythians had adopted the practice for their own princes, and in their homes on the Black Sea steppes heaped mounds of earth over wooden tomb-chambers which held the embalmed corpse.[33] Down to the time of Sennacherib the Assyrians, it seems, made their royal tombs of brick, the chief building-material of the plains; but that ruler describes himself as one 'who replaces brickwork, both in the buildings for the living and the tombs provided for the dead, with mountain limestone'.[34] Hvakhšathra, founder of the Deiocid dynasty, was an older contemporary of Sennacherib, and had been his tributary; and it is very possible that he too built himself a stone sepulchre when he built his stone palace and treasury at Ecbatana, in a region of abundant stone.

There is reason to believe that among Iranians in the remote past the custom of making offerings for the dead had developed in the case of chiefs and mighty warriors into a hero-cult, from which arose the belief in the warlike and protective fravašis; [35] and with a dynasty there was a belief also in its 'khvarenah' or 'farnah', the grace or divine power which was granted it by the gods, and through which it ruled.[36] When

[29] LAR II 345.

[30] LAR II 808.

[31] LAR II 815.

[32] I.198, cf. I.187.

[33] See E. H. Minns, Scythians and Greeks, Cambridge 1913, 149-240.

[34] LAR II 184.

[35] See HZ I 118-19.

[36] See HZ I 105, 106, and cf. above, p. 17.

kingly power became concentrated under the Deiocids in the person of one absolute ruler, the cult of the royal dead probably grew in significance, with a king's tomb being regarded as a place where, even after death, his fravaši and personal khvarenah could be invoked still to give help to his people.[37]

If, as seems likely, the Median kings fostered such a cult at their own sepulchres, as part of the mystique of absolute kingship, then it would have been natural that Cyrus, claiming to succeed to their authority, should have deemed it necessary and fitting that his body too should lie in a noble tomb, where due veneration could be paid to his spirit. Yet in his case there must have been a conflict between established custom, sentiment and policy on the one hand, and on the other the new demands of the Zoroastrian faith, with its particular purity laws.

The result of this conflict appears as a notable compromise: Cyrus built himself a tomb in which his embalmed body was subsequently laid, in defiance of the religious laws demanding the swift destruction of corrupting flesh; but he had the tomb made in such a way that there was not the smallest danger that his corpse could pollute the elements. Stone, according to the Zoroastrian purity laws, is impermeable, a solid barrier, unlike brick or wood, to impurity; and in his sepulchre the six-tiered platform of stone raises the stone tomb-chamber high above the good earth. The walls of the chamber are thick, and the narrow entrance, facing north-west, was once closed by a double-leaved door of stone, leading into a passage-way so low that a man had to stoop to enter. The chamber itself is smooth-walled, and above its stone roof is a hollow space, under a second gable-roof of stone. This hollow between the roofs was a practical device for relieving stress on the walls;[38] but it was also an added protection for the creations. A double roof with intervening space is a general feature in Zoroastrian fire-sanctuaries, so that no perching bird or prowling animal can bring impurity on to the inner roof immediately over the sacred fire; and conversely the double roof of the tomb made it impossible for a bird to perch on the one directly above the corpse, and so conceivably—even though this was of stone—carry away some faint trace of impurity to contaminate plant or earth.

The tomb was thus elaborately functional, as well as a noble piece of

[37] This idea has been put forward, especially in connection with the tombs of Darius and his successors, by P. Calmeyer, 'The subject of the Achaemenid tomb reliefs', Proceedings of the 3rd Annual Symposium on Archaeological Research in Iran, Tehran 1974, 233-6; 'Fortuna-Tyche-Khvarnah', JdI 94, 1979, 347-65.

[38] See Stronach, op. cit., 42, who points out that the technique had its parallels in Anatolian tombs.

architecture; and it reduced the violation of Zoroastrian law to a minimum. Only one sculptured ornament was indulged in, namely a great rosette carved in the gable-end over the entrance. This carving was fully preserved when the first European travellers visited the tomb in the seventeenth century;[39] but since then the upper stone of the gable-end has disappeared, and the sculpture is so much damaged that its faint remains had to be rediscovered in recent years.[40] The rosette was divided into the ritual three parts: a large outer circle of sharply-modelled petals, triangular in shape, with bigger and smaller ones alternating; within this a circle of 24 more rounded petals; and at the centre another circle of 12 petals. Parallels to this rosette have been found in Greek, Phrygian and Lydian art; but it clearly had more than decorative significance for Cyrus, that he should choose it as the sole adornment for his tomb; and it seems probable that he, or his priests, saw in this formal flower-design a symbol of the immortality of the soul which the king hoped for in the kingdom of Ahuramazda; for the Ameša Spenta Ameretāt, 'Immortality', is lord also of the creation of plants, and is elsewhere represented by a flower.[41]

The rosette or flower-symbol was by no means restricted thereafter to funerary art by the Achaemenians, but became one of their most widely-used motifs; but this appears proper, since Zoroastrianism enjoins that thoughts of the world to come should shape daily life, with each man living now in such a way that his actions may secure for him eternal bliss; and so it would be fitting for the symbol of immortality to be freely used as a constant visual reminder of this duty.

The Zendan-i Sulaiman

The northern edge of the palace area at Pasargadae is now dominated by the ruins of a tall tower, known popularly as the Zendan-i Sulaiman, 'Solomon's Prison'.[42] This tower, set on a triple-stepped stone plinth, rose to a height of just over 14 m. (about 46 ft.). It was square and built wholly of stone. The lower part was solid; and an imposing outer staircase, also of solid stone, led up from a paved area in front to a doorway in

[39] The tomb was visited by envoys sent to Isfahan by Queen Christina of Sweden in 1638, and a sketch made by them shows the rosette as a simple circle in the intact gable-end. The drawing is reproduced by Peter Bamm, The Great Power as Destiny, London 1968, 79 (a reference I owe to the kindness of Dr. A. Shahbazi).

[40] By D. Stronach, see op. cit., 35 ff.

[41] The shape of the segments of the outer circle led to their being interpreted at first as representing the rays of the sun, but the composition as a whole, taken together with comparative material, has made this appear unlikely.

[42] See Stronach, op. cit., 117-37, with Pls 95-101.

the upper part of the building. This doorway, facing north-west, led into the single windowless room of the tower. Above it were two small false windows, and there were twenty other blank windows inset with black stone, so that they stood out against the white stone of the rest of the structure. These windows were arranged in triple tiers, which conveyed the impression that the tower had three storeys. The doorway to the chamber was closed by a double-leaved stone door: and a stone fragment, thought to have belonged to one of the leaves, is ornamented with a row of twelve-petalled rosettes.[43] The oblong chamber itself was 3.21 m. wide, 4.73 m. high and probably 3.98 m. long (about 10 ft. 6 ins. by 15 ft. 5 ins. by 13 ft.). It was quite plain, and had a double roof—the inner one flat, the upper one a shallow pyramid in form.

The tower can be securely attributed to the time of Cyrus, because of its fine stonework (lacking any toothed-chisel marks), the use of contrasts in black and white, the superbly exact workmanship, and the peculiar form of the twelve-petalled rosettes, which can be closely dated to between 540 and 530;[44] and although in shape it differs markedly from the tomb of Cyrus, the essential likeness between the two structures is striking, too much so for the purpose of the tower to have been other than funerary. (Indeed there have been those who have argued that it was the Zendan itself which should be regarded as Cyrus' tomb.[45]) In both cases, that is, a small plain windowless room, with restricted access, has been raised up, at huge expense and labour, on courses of solid stone, and has been covered over, with great architectural skill, by a double roof of stone. Both buildings face in the same direction. In both the number three is prominent in the architectural divisions and details; and in both the sole adornment is a flower or flowers.

One interpretation of the Zendan has accordingly been that it was the tomb (otherwise unknown) of Cyrus' son Cambyses. The objection to this is that the tower was almost exactly copied by Darius the Great, with a structure now called the Ka'ba-yi Zardušt or 'Zoroaster's Cube'. This was built in a funerary area, that is, at the foot of the mountain of Naqš-i Rustam, in whose rockface are cut the tombs of Darius himself and three of his successors; and since the sepulchres of the other kings of his line are known, there seems no ruler for whom the Ka'ba could have been intended. And as the Ka'ba could not have held a king's body its prototype, the Zendan, could not, it is argued, have done so either.

[43] See ibid., 126.
[44] See Nylander, op. cit., 139-42.
[45] For references (and the counter-arguments) see Stronach, op. cit., 134.

Yet the sepulchres of Darius and his successors were each made to hold more than one coffin, whereas Cyrus chose to lie alone; and it is known from Sasanian sources that the bodies not only of kings but also of princes were entombed, not exposed. The same was presumably true for the Queen of queens, and the mothers of royal sons. Indeed, even outside the imperial family, burial seems to have remained the common rite for some generations under the Achaemenians, for Herodotus implies that still in his own day, the mid fifth century B.C., the Persian nobility were only reluctantly adopting that of exposure.[46] It seems very probable, therefore, that the Zendan, larger in dimensions than the tomb of Cyrus, was built as a family mausoleum, to hold the coffins of his queens and lesser members of the royal family. Herodotus states that Cyrus married Cassandane, herself an Achaemenian, who, according to his accounts, bore the king four children who are known to history: Cambyses, Smerdis, Atossa, and an unnamed younger daughter. She was much beloved by Cyrus, the Greek historian reports; and when she died the king 'made a great mourning ... and commanded all the subjects of his empire to observe the like'.[47] Such love on the part of an emperor is likely to have expressed itself in making a fitting tomb for his consort.

Cyrus is also said to have taken to wife a daughter of Astyages, to strengthen his claim to the Median throne;[48] and to judge from what is recorded of later Achaemenian kings, he would have had other lesser queens also, who are likely to have born him children. If the coffins were placed on tiered stands of silver or gold (thus approximating in splendour to the fittings of Cyrus' own tomb), the chamber of the Zendan could have housed worthily a number of the royal dead; and presumably the Ka'ba was later built for a similar purpose.

Another objection to supposing a funerary use for the Zendan has been, however, that the tower stands too close to the palace precinct, instead of in isolation like Cyrus' tomb. But by Zoroastrian law pollution does not radiate indefinitely, and it is permissible to approach to within thirty paces of a place of the dead without losing ritual purity. So the designers of the Zendan, having set the tomb-chamber at the top of a stairway with twenty-nine deep treads, rising from a pavement of solid stone, could well hold that they had raised it above any danger of contamination not only to the good earth but also to passers-by. There was, moreover, almost certainly an enclosed precinct round the tower,[49]

[46] I.140.
[47] Herodotus III.2, II.1.
[48] Xenophon, Cyropaedia VIII.5.18 f. On this statement see K. M. T. Atkinson, JAOS 76, 1956, 172 ff.
[49] See Stronach, op. cit., 129-30.

which would have made it quite impossible for pollution to reach any except those whose duties took them there.

None of the other suggestions for the purpose of this remarkable building seem in any way convincing.[50] It is plainly unsuitable for a fire-sanctuary (quite apart from the fact that there is no evidence for a temple-cult of fire at this early date); and it would have been almost as impracticable as a depository for ritual objects, regalia or documents. The surviving references to Achaemenian archives suggest that these were kept at the administrative capitals of Ecbatana or Babylon;[51] and in any case Cyrus, secure in Pasargadae, at the Persian heart of his great empire, had no cause to require his priests or officials to toil up steep stairs and struggle at the top with heavy stone doors, in order to deposit articles in safety. No need seems to have been felt at Pasargadae for any defensive measures.[52] The king's desire there appears simply to have been to build beautiful buildings as monuments to his greatness, and noble tombs where his bones, and those of his consorts and kinsmen, could rest in peace and dignity with as little violation as possible of the Zoroastrian purity laws.

Sculptures of the gatehouse and audience-hall

Although the tombs of Pasargadae are almost unadorned, there are the remains of rich carvings on the gatehouse and palace walls. The two main doorways of the former were once, it seems, flanked by winged monsters of Assyrian inspiration, traditional protectors of the palaces of kings;[53] and there survives on a door-jamb an imposing sculpture of a four-winged, bearded personage, which derives ultimately from the apotropaic figures carved in Assyrian palace gates.[54] This being wears, however, a long fringed robe similar to that of the Elamites, and has on its head the towering 'hmhm'-crown of Egypt, which was often given to divine beings in contemporary Syro-Phoenician art. The carving is thought, accordingly, to have political significance, as a visual declaration of the Persians' widespread rule over the ancient kingdoms of the Near East.[55] There is nothing harsh or aggressive, however, in its serene dignity.

[50] For references to these suggestions see Stronach, op. cit., 132-5.
[51] See Ezra V.17, with the commentary of E. J. Bickerman, 'The Edict of Cyrus in Ezra I', JBL LXV, 1946, 251, repr. in his Studies in Jewish and Christian History, Pt.I, Leiden 1976, 74.
[52] The high platform of the Tall-i Takht or Throne Hill was not intended as part of a fortified position, see Stronach, op. cit., 15.
[53] See ibid., 44, 51.
[54] See ibid., 47-50 with Pls 43-5.
[55] So Stronach, ibid., 54, with detailed bibliography of the various interpretations which have been proposed, pp. 51-4.

Traces still survive also of the reliefs which once adorned the entrances of the audience-hall.[56] Two of these, like that of the gatehouse figure, clearly derive from Assyrian prototypes; and although only the lower parts of the sculptures remain, they have been identified with the aid of Assyrian carvings as representing a warrior in short tunic, a lion-demon, a genius in a fish-skin cloak, and a bull-man. These again are thought to be apotropaic figures. The quality of the workmanship is very fine, and in its details it has affinities with Babylonian sculpture of the period.[57] Some have thought that it accords ill with the Zoroastrianism of Cyrus that the Persian king should adorn his palace-walls with the protective genii of an alien culture; but though Zoroastrianism forbids the propitiation of evil spirits, there is nothing in its laws against seeking to ward them off. Moreover, since the Iranians had no sculptural tradition of their own, they had necessarily to borrow motifs as well as craftsmen from other civilizations. In general the dearth of material for the history of the faith has meant that what little is known has been subjected to the severest scrutiny, and consistency, logic and unwavering orthopraxy have been demanded of its adherents, whereas all kinds of vagaries are accepted perforce from those of better-known religions. In England, for example, devout Christians have worshipped for hundreds of years in churches whose exteriors are adorned with pagan carvings, from the 'sheila-na-gig' or ancient fertility figure of Herefordshire, to the Greek caryatids who grace the front of a London church. The rural masons who carved the former probably still had some belief in its efficacy, while the city architect used the latter purely for dignity and adornment. Whatever Cyrus' motives were for allowing Assyrian genii to pace his palace-walls, there is no reason why he as a Zoroastrian should not be allowed as much latitude as Christians—or for that matter Jews, Muslims or Buddhists, all of whom have from time to time indulged in startling inconsistencies.

The inscriptions at Pasargadae

Another way in which Cyrus followed Near Eastern tradition on his palace walls was to have many texts inscribed there; for 'every Near Eastern monarch, Babylonian and Assyrian, Urartian and Elamite, had his buildings and other monuments inscribed to perpetuate the memory of his name'.[58] There are reckoned to have been at least twenty-

[56] See ibid., 68-70 with Pls 58-60.
[57] See Ann Farkas, Achaemenid Sculpture, Leiden 1974, 13.
[58] C. Nylander, 'Who wrote the inscriptions at Pasargadae?', Orientalia Suecana 16, 1968, 169 n.

four of these inscriptions at Pasargadae, carved, decoratively and symmetrically, in three languages, Elamite, Babylonian and Old Persian, each in its own distinctive cuneiform script;[59] and to judge from the surviving examples they all said either 'I, Cyrus the King, the Achaemenian', or 'Cyrus the Great King, the Achaemenian'.[60] These inscriptions are unlike later ones of the dynasty in their simplicity and lack of ancestral names; and argument has raged, 'manifold, dramatic and not rarely bitter',[61] about whether they are really to be ascribed to Cyrus. The chief crux is the use of Old Persian in cuneiform script. This script, the last of the cuneiforms, marks the first known setting down of any Iranian language in writing, and was obviously invented for that purpose; and the debate hinges on whether the system had already been created for writing Median under the Deiocids, presumably by an Urartian scribe in their employ, or whether it was the product of an Elamite scribe working for the Achaemenians, and in the latter case, whether it was really evolved under Cyrus, or whether (as has been plausibly suggested [62]) it was only the Elamite and Babylonian texts which were inscribed in his time, the Old Persian being added after the creation of the script in the reign of Darius. Fortunately, although the problem is one with many ramifications and considerable cultural interest, it does not directly affect the history of Zoroastrianism.[63]

Cyrus and alien faiths

Cyrus' tolerance towards alien faiths has been used as another argument against his orthodoxy; and there is no doubt that this tolerance was widely exercised. The earliest known instance of it, which we have already met, is his granting of privileges to the priests of Apollo near Magnesia; and richer evidence comes from Babylon. In 1879 a remarkable find was made among the palace ruins of the ancient city—a cylinder of baked clay, damaged, but bearing 45 lines of an edict by Cyrus.[64] A broken piece of the cylinder has since been identified, which helps to restore the text.[65] The edict is in Akkadian, in a style which has been

[59] Nylander, art. cit., 144 ff.
[60] See Kent, Old Persian, 116.
[61] Nylander, art. cit., 137.
[62] Ibid., 166 ff.
[63] For a bibliography of recent studies see P. Lecoq, 'Le problème de l'écriture cunéiforme vieux-perse', Comm. Cyrus III, Acta Iranica 3, 1974, 25-107.
[64] The text has been re-edited and translated (with bibliography) by W. Eilers, 'Der Keilschrifttext des Kyros-Zylinders', Festgabe deutscher Iranisten zur 2500 Jahrfeier Irans, Stuttgart 1971, 156-66 (French transl. of his article in Comm. Cyrus II, Acta Iranica 2, 1974, 25-34).
[65] See R. Borger, Handbuch der Keilschriftliteratur, Berlin 1967, 215; C. B. F. Walker apud J. Harmatta, Comm. Cyrus I, Acta Iranica I, 1974, 44.

characterized as standard scribal usage of the period;[66] but though composed evidently by the priests of Marduk, it must have had the approval of their new overlord, Cyrus, before it could be promulgated. The text runs in part as follows: 'Marduk ... scanned (and) inspected the assemblage of lands. He found then a righteous prince, according to his heart, whose hand he took. He pronounced the name of Cyrus, king of the city of Anshan ... He made the country of Guti and the armies of Manda [i.e. the Medes] bow beneath his feet. The black-headed people [i.e. the Babylonians] whom he delivered into his hands, he (Cyrus) treated them rightfully and justly ... All the people of Babylon ... bent very low before him, they kissed his feet, they rejoiced in his royalty'.

In the latter part of the edict, words are put into Cyrus' own mouth: 'I am Cyrus, king of the world, great king, mighty king, king of Babylon, king of the land of Sumer and Akkad, king of the four corners of the earth ... whose rule Bel and Nebo love ... Marduk, the great Lord, rejoices at my pious acts, and extends the grace of his blessing upon me, Cyrus the king, and upon Cambyses, son of my flesh, as well as upon all my army ... From ... Niniveh, Assur and also from Susa, from Akkad, Eshnunna, Zamban, Me-Turnu, Der, up to the land of the Guti, to the cities beyond the Tigris ... the gods who inhabit them, I returned them [i.e. their images] to their place, and I made their habitation very great for ever. I gathered all their peoples and led them back to their abodes. And the gods of Sumer and Akkad, whom Nabonidus had brought into Babylon, at the order of Marduk, the great lord, I had them installed in joy in their sanctuaries ... May all the gods whom I have led back to their cities wish daily before Bel and Nebo for the length of my days'.

The claim attributed here to Cyrus, that he restored the dwellings of gods, is borne out by a four-line text on a tablet found at Erech, which states: 'I am Cyrus, son of Cambyses, the mighty king, [re-]builder of Esagila and Ezida'.[67] Esagila was the great temple of Marduk in Babylon, and Ezida was Nabū's chief temple at Borsippa, to the south of that city. A long poem survives composed by a priest of Esagila on the downfall of Nabonidus, which dwells on the injustices of the Babylonian king, and ends with a curse on him, and a prayer for Cyrus [68]; and the acceptance of the Persian king as the new ruler of Babylon was publicly de-

[66] See Eilers, art. cit.; Harmatta, 'The literary models of the Babylonian edict of Cyrus', AAH XIX, 1971, 217-31.
[67] See Eilers, art. cit., 156 (25).
[68] See Sidney Smith, Babylonian Historical Texts relating to the capture and downfall of Babylon, London 1924, 27-97.

monstrated when his son Cambyses (Kambūjiya), then still very young, undertook the ritual royal duties in the Babylonian New Year Festival of 538. He was accordingly associated with Cyrus in the dating of that year (reckoned by the Babylonian scribes as that of 'Cyrus, king of the lands' and 'Cambyses, king of Babylon'.) [69]

On the Babylonian side there was nothing remarkable in casting Cyrus in the role of the beloved of Marduk and his appointed ruler over Babylon. The victor must always be the chosen of the gods, for this was the only way to reconcile the fact of his victory with the doctrine of their power; and there is, it has been pointed out, a striking parallel from later times when another alien king, the Seleucid Antiochus I Soter, is called the 'provider for Esagila and Ezida', and is caused to declare: 'After my heart had inclined me to (re)build Esagila and Ezida, I made by my pure hands, with choice oil, the bricks for Esagila and Ezida, in the land of Khattu, and I brought them to lay the foundations of Esagila and Ezida'.[70]

For a polytheistic Hellene there can have been no problem in accepting the pious role thus verbally assigned to him, while for Cyrus acquiescence appears to have been a matter of traditional diplomatic courtesy rather than one involving faith. Thus he not only permitted the priests of Babylon to represent him as a worshipper of Marduk, but allowed those of Ur to cause him to state that it was the 'great gods' of that city who 'had delivered all the lands' into his hand,[71] while those of Sīn claimed that it was the Moon-God who had brought about his triumph.[72] Of his proclamations to the many exiled peoples whom he permitted to return to their own lands only one survives—that to the Jews, too insignificant a group in the eyes of the Babylonian priests to be named in the cylinder-text. As preserved in Hebrew this proclamation runs: 'Thus saith King Cyrus of Persia: "All the kingdoms of the earth has Yahweh, the God of heaven, given me, and he has charged me to build a house for him in Jerusalem, which is in Judah. Whosoever is among you of all his people, his God be with him, and let him go up to Jerusalem, which is in Judah, and build the house of Yahweh, the God of Israel. He is the God who is

[69] See Nabonidus Chronicle, Col. iii 24-8 (S. Smith, op. cit., 118). Smith, Isaiah, 48, held that Cyrus let his young son perform this ritual part because to do so himself might have offended the Persians; and he argued strongly (pp. 155-6) against those who suppose that Cambyses actually shared the rule of Babylon with his father during this year. Differently Dandamaev, Persien, 100, 101-2; Gnoli, Comm. Cyrus II, Acta Iranica 2, 1974, 160-1.

[70] See Dhorme, La religion babylonienne, 150.

[71] See C. J. Gadd and L. Legrain, Ur Excavation Texts I, London, 1928, no. 194.

[72] See Bickerman, art. cit. in n. 51, p. 264 (93) with references.

in Jerusalem'.[73] Similar proclamations, with due changes in the name of the god and the place, were made, it is assumed, to all the exiled peoples named on the cylinder text, whose temples also had been razed.

Cyrus presumably pursued this benign course for a mixture of motives, some of them pragmatic. From the earliest days of his kingship in Anshan he appears to have used diplomacy as an ally to force, and one to be preferred when possible; and his tolerant policies won him a general harvest of goodwill, and numerous practical advantages as ruler.[74] His religion too may have strengthened a natural inclination towards constructive and kindly action. Doctrinally it is impossible to reconcile his verbal acknowledgements of alien great gods with his own acceptance of Ahuramazda as the one true God, Creator of all; but in this he was only acting, however illogically, in accordance with the conventions of the civilizations he had subdued. Thus it has been said of the Near Eastern religions of his day: 'The belief in the universal dominion of a supreme god, the idea that a local deity, let us say Koshar of Ugarit, reigns also over Crete and Memphis, changed the formula of homage but left intact its content. A new ruler received the lordship from each universal god simultaneously, and established his relations to each god separately as before'.[75] Cyrus probably accepted these conventions the more readily because he would inevitably himself have felt that Ahuramazda, even though Creator and Lord of all, was above all God of the Iranians, his chosen people, to whom he had revealed himself through his prophet Zoroaster, not being equally accessible to alien, 'anarya' prayers. ('Anarya', that is 'non-Iranian', is a term somewhat similar in its overtones to Greek 'barbaros'.)

Even had the instinctive beliefs of conqueror and conquered not been of this kind, it would plainly have been impossible for the Persians to impose their own religion on the numerous and diverse peoples of the ancient lands they now ruled. A parallel is furnished in modern times by the British, observant Christians in their imperial days, who never made any official attempts to spread their own religion among their 'heathen' subjects, and who would, for political reasons, have been much perturbed if the sons of rajahs and sultans who were educated in England

[73] Ezra VI.3-5, see Bickerman, art. cit., 254 (77), following the transl. of the Jewish Publication Society. Bickerman convincingly established the authenticity of the text; for some additional notes see B. A. Levine, JAOS 99, 1979, 83-5.

[74] That the rebuilding of temples was sometimes usefully linked with the rebuilding of fortresses by the subject peoples has been established by M. Dunand, 'La défense du front mediterranéen de l'Empire achémenide' in The role of the Phoenicians in the interaction of Mediterranean civilizations, ed. W. A. Ward, Beirut 1968, 43-51.

[75] Bickerman, art. cit., 264 (93).

had become converted there to the 'European' faith. Yet no one doubts, on this account, the piety and orthodoxy of Queen Victoria.

Yet although the British Government deliberately refrained from proselytizing, individuals and private societies were active in trying to spread Christian beliefs; and even apart from their efforts, Christian doctrines and observances gradually became known, and had a marked influence on groups of educated Hindus, Zoroastrians and others. The parallel can still be pursued with the Achaemenian Empire; for there too, though there appears to have been no official proselytizing, individuals (like the earlier propagandists for Cyrus) evidently spoke ardently about their faith, while the beliefs and practices of the imperial court and provincial governors naturally became generally known to some extent, and influenced other men in their ideas and observances, even while these continued to adhere to their own religions.

The magi

The written records of Cyrus' reign are virtually all from foreign sources, Babylonian and Greek, and concerned largely with political events; and so the role of the magi at that period has to be inferred or pieced together from scraps of evidence. Zoroastrian magi may be supposed to have held an authoritative place at court from the time of his accession; and their influence is indeed attested in the remains at Pasargadae, where the fire-holders and tombs both testify to orthopraxy. The transmission of Avestan texts by Persian priests of the Achaemenian period has been deduced on linguistic grounds,[76] and it is certainly to be expected that an important priestly college would have been founded then in Pars itself, even though the religious authority of Raga still seems to have been recognized.

The testimony of Second Isaiah, as we have seen, suggests the presence of a Zoroastrian priest living and probably studying in Babylon; and after the conquest more Zoroastrian priests must have gone to live there, some to care for the needs of Persian officials and others, some probably simply to study further—for Babylonian lore, especially in the fields of astronomy and astrology, was to contribute largely to the development of Zoroastrian scholasticism by western Iranian priests.[77]

[76] See K. Hoffmann, art. cit. on p. 42 n. 12.

[77] The life of the Babylonian temples flowed on uninterrupted by the Persian conquest, see, e.g., A. Tremayne, Records from Erech, time of Cyrus and Cambyses (528-521 B.C.), Yale Oriental Series, Babylonian Texts VII, 1925. Moulton, EZ, 187-8, 429-30, saw an Iranian high priest earlier in Babylon in the *rab-mag* of Jer. XXXIX.3, 13, so also Duchesne-Guillemin, Rel., 26 (17); but this title, attested elsewhere in cuneiform script, is now recognized to be an Akkadian one. So already Clemen, Nachrichten, 210.

The only actual mention of magi in a work referring to the life-time of Cyrus occurs in the romance of Cyrus as related by Herodotus. He tells how Astyages, having dreamt an ominous dream concerning his daughter Mandana, repeatedly consulted 'those of the magi who interpreted dreams'.[78] They expounded its meaning to him accurately and in full, whereat he was much alarmed. However, in subsequent deliberations they decided that the omen which the dream had brought had been harmlessly fulfilled; but events proved them wrong, and when Cyrus finally revolted Astyages seized them and had them impaled.[79]

The tale which Herodotus tells cannot be regarded as historical, but it belongs to its time in the serious regard paid in it to dreams, a regard shared by, among others, Aristotle, who held that 'when the soul is isolated in sleep, it assumes its true nature and foresees and foretells the future'.[80] Among the magi who embraced Zoroastrianism there were some who continued to practise the interpretation of dreams, as well as other forms of divination and manticism; and they must have had many things in common with the magi who adhered to the old religion, from whom, however, they would have been divided in doctrine and also in worship (using as they must have done prayers and liturgies in the Avestan language, as well as following various different observances). Pagan priests evidently continued to exist in the land, and even with a Zoroastrian king on the throne it must have been a matter of generations before the eastern religion prevailed generally. Indeed pockets of paganism appear to have persisted in remote areas down into Islamic times. This slow progress is not surprising when one considers how long traces of pagan beliefs and practices survived in, for instance, so small and closely governed a Christian country as England. Probably also there were Zoroastrians who had recourse occasionally to old practices, such as are recorded by Herodotus and by Plutarch, some of which demanded the services of magi prepared to have dealings with the dark powers. For this too, Christian Europe can provide parallels in all too great abundance, with black masses and other rites. But just as such aberrances, when recorded, do not prove that Europe in general was not Christian, so occasional heterodox doings cannot be taken to impugn the Zoroastrian orthodoxy of the majority of western Iranians in and after the reign of Cyrus.

[78] I.107 ff.

[79] I.128.

[80] On Philosophy, Frg. 12a (quoted from The Works of Aristotle, transl. into English, ed. D. Ross, Oxford 1952).

The later identification of Cyrus with Kavi Vištāspa

Centuries later, probably long after the establishing of the Seleucid era (reckoned from 312/311 B.C.) had given new stimulus to chronological calculations, the magi of western Iran sought to discover the date at which their prophet had lived; and since Iranian tradition, with its indifference to worldly history, supplied no precise facts, they seem to have turned for help to Babylonian sources.[81] The Babylonian priests, with their many written records, were clearly able to give them the date of the conquest of their own land by Cyrus, that is, 228 years before the Seleucid era, or 539 B.C. The magi appear then still to have known that Cyrus had embraced the teachings of Zoroaster and made them current in the world by battling against unbelievers, a role ascribed in the Avesta to Kavi Vištāspa, the first royal patron of the faith.[82] Traditional genealogies (transmitted perhaps with the lost Persian epic poetry) would have preserved the fact that Cyrus was soon followed on the throne by Darius the Great; and, as we have seen, Darius' father was himself called Vištāspa. In ancient Iran a son regularly succeeded his father; and it seems that scholar-priests, struggling to reconcile these diverse facts, came to the satisfying but erroneous conclusion that Cyrus, the Persian conqueror of Babylon, was to be identified as the father of Darius, that is, as the Achaemenian Vištāspa; and that, further, this Vištāspa was the Kavi Vištāspa who was celebrated in the Avesta. This reconstruction would have seemed all the more reasonable since by that time (probably in the early centuries of the Christian era) the Median magi had annexed most of the Avestan tradition to western Iran,[83] so that it was not difficult for their scholars to see Kavi Vištāspa as an Achaemenian king. It was these developments, it seems, which led in the end to complete oblivion for Cyrus in Zoroastrian tradition, a blank which has puzzled many scholars;[84] for it thus became possible to see the date of his conquest of Babylon, 539 B.C., as a moment of triumph and joy for Kavi Vištāspa, and so to identify it as the vital point in world history when the latter king embraced the prophet's teachings and proclaimed them to his subjects. This then was further equated with the time of Zoroaster's own maturity, when he was thirty years of age; and

[81] See A. Shahbazi, 'The "traditional date of Zoroaster" explained', BSOAS XL, 1977, 25-35.
[82] See Yt XIII.99-100.
[83] See above, p. 8 n. 31.
[84] His name is never mentioned in the Pahlavi books or in the later royal genealogies; and it is only in modern times, with greater knowledge of the past, that it has been revived as a personal name among Zoroastrians. The Parsis give it in fact in English spelling and pronunciation, since they first learnt of the Achaemenians in schools and colleges from English teachers, see Boyce, Zoroastrians, 219.

so the prophet's birth was set thirty years earlier, in 570 B.C.,[85] or as the magi expressed it '258 years before Alexander' (the Seleucid era being also known in ancient times as the 'era of Alexander'.[86])

For magi living in the late Parthian period this must have seemed a very remote date, quite sufficient to satisfy the traditional belief in the immense antiquity of their venerated prophet. Today, however, in the light of fuller knowledge, it can be seen to be far too recent to be reconciled with the facts of Zoroastrian scripture and doctrine, or with the earlier Achaemenian traditions about Zoroaster's remoteness in time; and for our present purposes its chief interest is that it shows that a tradition was preserved over centuries that the first Achaemenian King of kings established Zoroastrianism as a religion of state[87], repeating thus on the world stage the role originally played by the eastern Kavi Vištāspa, to whom therefore Cyrus yielded his identity in the history of the faith as this was reconstructed by western magi in later times.

[85] In the fully evolved tradition of the prophet's life, with its calculated relative dates, Zoroaster receives his revelation at the age of thirty, and is forty-two when he enlightens Kavi Vištāspa, see HZ I 184 ff. These discrepancies arose, it seems, from successive attempts to reconcile conflicting data.
[86] See Shahbazi, art. cit., 27 ff.
[87] Cf. below, pp. 213-4.

CHAPTER FIVE

CAMBYSES (530-522 B.C.)

The death and entombment of Cyrus

Cyrus, for all his ambition and conquests, left a fair fame behind him; and Aeschylus, who had no cause to love the Persians, accorded him a generous epitaph: "Cyrus, fortunate, whose rule brought peace to all ... No god resented him, for he was wise'.[1] Yet although the Achaemenian king established a *pax persica* over a great part of the world, making it possible for men to travel and trade unhindered from the Hellespont to the Indian border-lands, he himself died fighting, striving, it is said, to subdue the semi-nomadic Massagetae on his empire's north-eastern frontier.[2] His body was brought back to Pasargadae, and there placed in his tomb.[3] These events took place in 530 B.C.; and some two hundred years later, when Alexander had the tomb opened, the body of the great king was found, according to Aristobulos, lying in a golden coffin on a platform with legs of beaten gold.[4] Metal, like stone, is recognised under Zoroastrian law to be a barrier against impurity, so the polluting corpse was enclosed securely even within its stone sepulchre; but because it was that of a king, it was gorgeously attired in richly coloured garments, with weapons and adornments of gold and precious gems. There was also a table by the coffin, on which probably offerings had been placed.

Within the precinct of the tomb, Aristobulos related, stood a small building, made for the magi who 'ever since the time of Cambyses the son of Cyrus had kept watch over the tomb, the duty passing from father to son throughout that period. They received from the king a sheep and fixed quantities of wheat-flour and wine every day, and every month a horse to be sacrificed for Cyrus'.[5] In the light of known Zoroastrian usage it thus appears that Cambyses, as a dutiful son, endowed religious services, with offerings to be consecrated daily for his father's soul.

[1] The Persians, l.769 ff. (quoted in the Eng. transl. of S. G. Benardete, in The Complete Greek Tragedies, ed. D. Greene and R. Lattimore, Vol. I, Chicago 1959).
[2] Herodotus I.201 ff.; on this and the other accounts of his final battle, see Dandamaev, Persien, 103-4.
[3] See Dandamaev, op. cit., 104 n. 421.
[4] Apud Arrian, Anabasis VI.29.1.4 ff.
[5] Ibid.

Unleavened bread, meat and wine are offerings essential for certain basic ceremonies, and the sheep would have provided fat also for the oblation to fire [6] (which could have been made, with ritual propriety, to the hearth-fire in the priest's own dwelling.[7]) The monthly sacrifice of a horse was a costly gift, fit for a king; and it may have been chosen partly for this reason, partly because the horse was regarded as a creature of the sun, and so perhaps was linked with sun-filled Paradise on high.[8] Such offerings may be assumed to have been ancient traditional ones, continued by Zoroastrians. The first three—sheep, wine and wheat-flour—figure in royal offerings recorded in Sasanian times; and they were still being regularly made for the sake of the dead in conservative Zoroastrian communities in Iran in the latter part of the twentieth century A.C.[9]

Cambyses in Egypt

Having performed his filial duties towards his dead father and established his own rule in the land, Cambyses set out in 525 to accomplish what Cyrus had, it seems, long planned, namely the conquest of Egypt, 'taking with him, with others subject to him, some of the Greeks over whom he held sway'.[10] Service in this way in the imperial armies must have vied with trade throughout the Achaemenian epoch as a means of bringing peoples together and spreading customs and ideas.

Egypt was then under the rule of Psammetich III, who had just succeeded his father Amasis—a usurper who in 569 had seized the throne from Apries, the last legitimate pharaoh of the 26th (Saite) dynasty. There was considerable discontent in the land; and at Cambyses' coming some Greek mercenaries deserted to him from the Egyptian side, and the Egyptian admiral, Udja-Hor-resenet, surrendered the fleet without a blow. A hard-fought battle on land ended in victory for the Persians. Thereafter Memphis was taken, and Psammetich made captive.

Egyptian records show that, though pillage and disorder followed the conquest, Cambyses soon restrained his troops and tried to repair much of the damage they had done. This was evidently part of a policy similar to that which his father had pursued in Babylon, whereby he strove to be recognized as the legitimate ruler of the land. In his efforts to present himself as rightful successor to the Saites and founder of a

[6] See HZ I 148 ff.
[7] See HZ I 154-5 with n. 49.
[8] See HZ I 111, 151.
[9] See Boyce, Stronghold, 157 ff.
[10] Herodotus II.1.

27th dynasty, Cambyses had as counsellor Udja-hor-resenet, who was himself the son of a priest of Sais (the dynastic city of the 26th dynasty), and a man of learning as well as active in affairs of state. He was appointed by Cambyses as his chief physician, and entrusted with ordering his court in Egypt, and (it would seem) with advising on protocol and diplomacy there.

One measure taken to legitimize Cambyses' rule seems to have been to put it about that he was the son of Cyrus by princess Nitetis, a daughter of the deposed Apries.[11] According to Herodotus, however, Cambyses' mother was the Achaemenian Cassandane; and the chronology of the claimed Egyptian marriage would present striking difficulties, since Apries was put to death in 566—eight years before Cyrus became a vassal-king in Anshan. Nevertheless, consistent with this claim to be the true heir to the Saite pharaoh, Cambyses dated his rule over Egypt to 530, the year of his accession in Persia, rather than to 525, the year of his Egyptian conquest. He also had the mummy of Amasis taken from its resting-place in Sais and scourged, presumably 'to demonstrate that Amasis was a usurper on the throne of Egypt'.[12] Herodotus adds that finally Cambyses ordered the body to be burned, which he says was a sacriligious command, since the Persians held fire to be a god, and therefore considered it not right to burn the dead,'as they say it is wrong to give the dead body of a man to a god'.[13] However, since other stories about Cambyses' wickedness have been shown to be false, it may be that this detail was no more than a particularly black slander, invented to his further detriment.

In support of his claim to be the rightful successor to Apries, Cambyses exerted himself to restore order and dignity in Sais, which had been occupied by his soldiery. He brought back its priests, restored the temple-revenues, revived the cult, and presented libations for Osiris. Finally he attended in person to offer veneration to the dynastic goddess of the Saites, Neith, and to make gifts to the other gods of the city. All this is recorded in carvings on statues from Sais, which have been preserved.[14] In one of these Udja-hor-resenet declares: 'His Majesty did this because I had enlightened him about all the useful work done in

[11] Herodotus III.1 ff.; on the various versions of the story see in detail K. M. T. Atkinson, 'The legitimacy of Cambyses and Darius as kings of Egypt', JAOS 76, 1956, 167-77, and especially p. 172 ff.

[12] Atkinson, art. cit., 171.

[13] III.16.

[14] See G. Posener, La première domination perse en Égypte; E. Otto, Die biographischen Inschriften der ägyptischen Spätzeit, Leiden 1954.

this sanctuary by every king'[15]—a statement which brings out the official and dynastic nature of Cambyses' actions. He was in fact doing as his father had taught him to do, when as a young prince he had 'taken the hand of Marduk' at the Babylonian New Year festival, and so fulfilled the ritual part assigned to a Babylonian king.[15a]

It was not only in Sais that Cambyses performed royal duties towards Egyptian cults. A stele in the Serapeum at Memphis records the death there of an Apis-bull in the sixth year of his official reign, i.e. 524;[16] and this bull was buried in a sarcophagus on which the inscription runs: 'Horus, Samtowi, king of Upper and Lower Egypt, Mestiu-Re, son of Re, Cambyses, may he live for ever. He made as his monument to his father, Apis-Osiris, a great sarcophagus of granite, which the king of Upper and Lower Egypt, Mestiu-Re, son of Re, Cambyses, dedicated, who is given all life, all stability, and good fortune, all health, all gladness, appearing as king of Upper and Lower Egypt'.[17] The titles used here by the Persian king were traditional Egyptian ones; and on the accompanying stele he is shown in Egyptian royal costume, kneeling in reverence before the sacred bull.

The next Apis-bull lived for over eight years, dying when Darius was king; and these facts together disprove the story transmitted by Herodotus[18] that Cambyses, as part of a general mockery of the Egyptian gods, stabbed an Apis-bull and left it to die and be buried secretly by its priests. This story appears to belong to a sustained campaign of vilification of Cambyses, which was so effective that history knows him as half-mad, cruel and irresponsible—a king who, in the words of Aeschy-

[15] Posener, op. cit., inscription I.c.30.

[15a] This incident has been freshly treated by A. L. Oppenheim, 'A New Cambyses Incident', Survey XV, New Studies 1960-1973 in memoriam A. U. Pope, ed. J. Gluck, The Asia Institute 1974, 3497-3502 (an article for knowledge of which I am indebted to the kindness of Professor Edith Porada). He has edited the damaged last lines (ll. 24-28) of the 'Nabonidus Chronicle', col. 3, to yield the following sense: 'When on the fourth day of the month Nisannu, Cambyses, son of C[yrus], went to the temple Ê.NÍG.PA.KALAM.MA.SUM.MU, the priest [gave him] the sceptre of Nabu [...(but) when] he went [to... they did not allow him] to accompany the image of Nabu on account of (his) Elamite dress; [only when they had removed] from [him] spears and quivers [did ...] the son of the king [go] to the ser[vice ... (when ?)] Nabu returned (with the procession) to the temple Esagila [he, i.e. Cambyses, performed] the sacrifice in front of Bel and the Son of Bel'. This reconstruction Oppenheim took to mean that Cambyses had intended a deliberate insult by attending the New Year ceremony in his ordinary attire instead of the ritual one prescribed for 'accompanying a god', seeking thus 'to demonstrate his rejection of a foreign religion'. But this hardly seems to accord with his being present at the ceremony at all, and actually performing a sacrifice there; and to the present writer it appears that the passage has been restored and interpreted in the light of Perso-Egyptian propaganda against Cambyses (see further below), rather than providing independent corroboration for it.

[16] On the date see Atkinson, art. cit., 170-1.

[17] See Posener, op. cit., 171; quoted in the English translation of Olmstead, Persian Empire, 90.

[18] III.27-9.

lus, 'shamed his country and his ancestral throne'.[19] In fact he seems to have been a rational and statesmanlike ruler, who strove like his father Cyrus to reconcile territorial ambitions and military conquest with the re-establishment of peace and order. But with such aims went the desire for substantial tribute; and it was presumably both for this reason, and to reduce the enormous power of the Egyptian priesthood, that Cambyses issued a decree limiting the revenues and privileges of Egyptian temples, which had been exceedingly lavish under the Saites.[20] It is thought to have been this action of his, together with the spoliation by his troops immediately after the conquest, which provided the basis for the legend that he destroyed temples.[21] This legend, fostered no doubt by Egyptian priests, is not only recorded by Greeks, but finds expression in a letter written by the Jews of Elephantine in 410 B.C.—some three generations after the events. These Jews were apparently the descendants of mercenaries who had entered the service of the Saite pharaohs and been put in charge of the fortresses of Yeb (on the island of Elephantine) and Syene, to defend Egypt's southern frontier.[22] The letter in question concerns the destruction at the end of the fifth century 'of the temple of the God Yahu', concerning which they wrote to the governor of Judea: 'Already in the days of the kings of Egypt our fathers had built that temple in Yeb, [and when Cambyses came into Egypt] he found that built, and the temples of the gods of the Egyptians, all of them they overthrew, but no one did any harm to that temple'.[23] In an answering letter, this Jewish temple is referred to as 'the altar-house of the God of Heaven, which was built in the fortress of Yeb formerly, before Cambyses'.[24] The reason why it was spared harassment, it is suggested, is that the Jewish soldiers had readily changed masters at the Persian conquest, and become loyal servants of the new rulers. Moreover, their temple clearly had no rich endowments to be curtailed, for when eventually it was destroyed they had to seek help from elsewhere to rebuild it.

It is natural that the Egyptian priests should have felt bitter towards the alien conqueror, whose troops had pillaged their temples, and who himself deliberately sought to lessen their wealth and power; and the traducing of Cambyses' name appears due to this bitterness meeting and

[19] Loc. cit. in n. 1.
[20] Posener, op. cit., 170.
[21] See Sachau, Aramäische Papyrus und Ostraka, xii-xiv; F. K. Kienitz, Die politische Geschichte Ägyptens, 57-60.
[22] See Sachau, loc. cit.
[23] Cowley, Aram. papyri, no. 30.12-14.
[24] Ibid., 32.3-5.

being encouraged by the political hostility felt towards him by his cousin, Darius the Great—a hostility which meant that Cambyses lacked for his reputation the protection usually extended to its individual members by a ruling dynasty.

The marriages of Cambyses

The ancient Iranians were, it appears, an endogamous people. In the east there is the instance of Kavi Vištāspa of the clan of the Naotaras, who married Hutaosā, herself a Naotara; and in the west Cyrus the Achaemenian married the Achaemenian Cassandane. Nothing is known, however, of the degrees of affinity in either case. Cambyses himself is recorded to have married two of his full sisters; but first, Herodotus relates, he consulted the 'royal judges', who administered and interpreted the law in Persia, about the propriety of this act. They replied that 'they did not find any law allowing a brother to take his sister to wife, but they found a law that the king of the Persians might do whatever he pleased'.[25] One of his sister-wives accompanied Cambyses to Egypt (where she died, it seems, of a miscarriage [26]); and it has been suggested that in contracting these marriages Cambyses was deliberately adopting a custom of the pharaohs, in accordance with his claim to be the rightful king of Egypt.[27] Yet it hardly seems possible to consider his marriages in isolation, given the well-attested and long-enduring Zoroastrian practice of 'khvaētvadatha' or next-of-kin marriage—a practice which cannot possibly have originated with Cambyses himself, since such personal influence as he might have exerted during his short reign would have been speedily extinguished through the hostility of Darius.

Much has been written about the practice of khvaētvadatha, which caught the attention of Greek writers in the following century, and continued to be the subject of record and comment by foreigners down into the early centuries of the Christian era. The custom included marriages within the close family circle—father with daughter, sister with brother—and to make them was regarded as a highly meritorious religious duty, incumbent on king and commoner, layman and priest. Khvaētvadatha is lauded in the Zoroastrian confessional, the Fravarānē (in what is perhaps an interpolated sentence [28]); but its origin has nevertheless been widely sought in the west. Parallels have been drawn not

[25] III.31.
[26] See Herodotus III.32 (where, inevitably, Cambyses himself is accused of occasioning this).
[27] See Atkinson, art. cit. in n. 11, 176-7.
[28] See HZ I 254 with n. 24.

only with the usages of the pharaohs, but also with those of the ancient Hebrews and Greeks;[29] and actual influence upon the Persians has been looked for from societies which appear to have been originally matriarchal, that is Elam (where a queen is known to have married her two brothers[30]) and Lycia. That Lycia still had a matrilinear society in the fifth century B.C. has been deduced from a passage of Herodotus,[31] and from surviving funerary inscriptions; but scholarly doubt has been cast on the soundness of this deduction.[32] In any case it is quite impossible that Lycians should have been able to exert a deep and abiding influence on the Zoroastrian community, and very doubtful in the case of the Elamites (of whose practices, apart from these isolated instances of royal marriages, very little is in fact known). Nor is the suggestion that the custom may have reached the Iranians with the cult of Ishtar any more convincing, since it is unknown among other worshippers of that goddess.

One is left, therefore, to speculation. It seems just conceivable that at an early and struggling stage of its history—perhaps during the difficult times which followed the downfall of Kavi Vištāspa—the Zoroastrian community, while earnestly promoting marriages between the faithful, found itself, because of their small numbers, solemnizing unions within the immediate family. In an endogamous society, this could presumably have been done without creating a sense of outrage (or similar customs would not be so widely attested in the ancient Near East); and thereafter, one would have to suppose, Zoroastrian priests, known for their respect for precedent, developed a theory based on such early practice to the effect that these close unions actually strengthened the faith and so were meritorious.

Such a hypothesis at least goes some way towards explaining why khvaētvadatha should have come to be regarded as not merely an acceptable social practice but a religious duty. Further, the fact that there is an Avestan term for it (whereas there is none, for instance, for a fire temple) suggests that the custom came to western Iran from the east.[33] If there is any basis, therefore, for Herodotus' account of Cambyses' consultation with the royal judges, it may be that he, as the first

[29] See, e.g., E. Kornemann, 'Zur Geschwisterehe im Altertum', Klio XIX, 1925, 355-61.
[30] See R. Labat, CAH II 2, 500; W. Hinz, Lost World of Elam, 91.
[31] I.173.
[32] See S. Pembroke, 'Last of the matriarchs: a study in the inscriptions of Lycia', J. of the Economic and Social History of the Orient VIII, 1965, 217-47.
[33] The element of khvaētvadatha in the developed story of the three Saošyants (see HZ I 285) could, however, have been added at a late date.

Persian king to contemplate practising khvaētvadatha, sought initially to test this duty then required by Zoroastrianism against the traditional laws of his own people.[34]

The story has its interest also in suggesting that Cambyses, despite his power as King of kings, respected the law and sought to abide by it. In general a regard for law and order—one aspect of 'aša'—seems to have marked much of his conduct, as far as can be discerned from the tangle of surviving evidence, Greek and Egyptian; but like Cyrus before him, he appears determined that it should be he who administered the law and brought about the order, in as many lands as he could bring under his rule.

[34] On the theory behind the practice see further below, p. 196; and for a survey of modern writings on it see J. Duchesne-Guillemin, 'Reflections on "yaoždā" with a digression on "xvaētvadatha"', in Myth and Law among the Indo-Europeans, University of California Press 1970, 203 ff.

CHAPTER SIX

BARDIYA AND 'GAUMĀTA THE MAGUS' (522 B.C.)

Usurpation of the Persian throne by Bardiya

Towards the end of 524, or the beginning of 523, Cambyses, having failed to conquer Ethiopia, returned to Memphis to face an Egyptian uprising, which he quelled. Then came news from Persia that his younger brother Bardiya had usurped the throne. Babylonian documents show that this happened in March 522.[1] Cambyses set out at once to challenge him but died on the way, in April of that year. Bardiya, who seems to have been generally popular, then continued peacefully on the throne,[2] taking to wife, Herodotus relates,[3] Cambyses' widowed queens, among whom was his own full sister Atossa. This act was presumably primarily political, and to be effective must have been publicly performed. Bardiya's marriage with Atossa appears to have been the third close khvaētvadatha-union solemnized by a king in Zoroastrian Persia.

The story of Gaumāta

According to Herodotus, however, the Bardiya who went through this marriage-ceremony was not in fact Cambyses' brother, but another man who looked like him and happened to have the same name—a twin-like imposter; and thus he explains the fact that a few months later, in September 522, Darius son of Hystaspes (Dārayavahu son of Vištāspa), a third cousin of Bardiya's, slew him and proclaimed himself king. Almost every land in the empire, including Persia, rose against him; but with outstanding military skill he succeeded in crushing the uprisings one by one, and in securing his position on the throne. Thereafter, he presented his own version of the events leading to his accession in the great inscription which he had carved on the rock-face of the sacred mountain of Behistun, in the heart of Media. His narrative there runs as follows: 'Kambūjiya, son of Kūruš, of our family, was king here. That Kambūjiya had a brother named Bardiya, of the same mother, of the same father as Kambūjiya. Then Kambūjiya killed that Bardiya. When Kambūjiya killed Bardiya, it did not become known to the people that Bardiya had been killed. Then Kambūjiya went to Egypt. When

[1] See Dandamaev, Persien, 126-7.
[2] See ibid., with pp. 131-2.
[3] III.68.

Kambūjiya had gone to Egypt, then the people became rebellious. Then Falsehood (Drauga) flourished in the land, both in Persia and in Media and in the other lands. . . . Then there was a man, a magus named Gaumāta. He rose up in Paišiyāuvādā at a mountain named Arkadriš . . . He lied to the people thus: "I am Bardiya, son of Kūruš, brother of Kambūjiya". Then all the people became rebellious and went over from Kambūjiya to him, both in Persia and Media and in the other lands . . . Then Kambūjiya died of his own death . . .[4] This kingship which Gaumāta the Magus took away from Kambūjiya, this kingship had from long past belonged to our family. Then Gaumāta the Magus took (it) from Kambūjiya; he took to himself both Persia and Media and the other lands. He made (them) his own, he became king. . . . There was not a man, neither a Persian nor a Mede nor anyone of our family, who could deprive that Gaumāta the Magus of the kingship. The people feared him greatly. He slew in numbers the people who had previously known Bardiya; for this reason he slew the people "lest they should know me, that I am not Bardiya, son of Kūruš". No one dared to say anything against Gaumāta the Magus until I came. Then I entreated the help of Ahuramazda. Ahuramazda bore me aid . . . Then I with a few men killed that Gaumāta the Magus, and those who were his foremost followers. At the fortress named Sikayauvati, in the district named Nisāya, in Media—there I killed him. I took the kingship from him. By the will of Ahuramazda I became king'.[5]

The story thus carved in stone, followed by the relation of Darius' many and swift victories over those who rose against him, was made known throughout the empire. Fragments survive of written Aramaic and Babylonian versions; and it cannot be doubted that it was formally proclaimed in the local tongue by heralds in every satrapy.[6] Nevertheless, the strange tale which Darius had to tell of his predecessor's death survives elsewhere not simply in this version, but with odd variants, recorded by the Greek writers.[7] They (with their usual diffi-

[4] This curious phrase has been re-examined by Dandamaev, op. cit., 146-50, who takes it as a special usage, with the implication that Cambyses died a natural death without suffering the punishment proper to his supposed crimes.
[5] DB I.28-60. The expression *vašnā auramazdāha*, which occurs over 50 times in Darius' inscriptions, is usually understood to mean 'by the will (or wish) of A.'; but O. Szemerényi, 'Iranica V', Mon. Nyberg II, Acta Iranica 5, 1975, 325-43, argues for the meaning 'through the greatness (or might) of A.'
[6] Cf. Hinz, Neue Wege, 18, 22; and for the fragments see Cowley, Aram. Papyri, 248-71; F. H. Weissbach, Babylonische Miscellen, Leipzig 1903, no. X, 24-6 with Pl.9; R. Koldewey, Die Königsburgen von Babylon II, ed. F. Wetzel, Leipzig 1932 (repr. 1969), 21-4 with Pl. 19. On a copy of the Behistun relief see the next chapter.
[7] See the summary by Olmstead, Persian Empire, 109; and the more detailed survey by Dandamaev, op. cit., 108 ff.

culties with foreign names) call Bardiya and the 'pretender' by a number of appellations, from Mardos, adapted then to Smerdis (a common Greek name at the time), Maruphius, Merphis and a totally divergent Tanaoxares, Tanyoxarces;[7a] and the story varies with the names. Thus Aeschylus, who was born during the reign of Cambyses, knew 'Mardos' simply as a Persian king, assassinated by one Artaphrenes. Herodotus gives his imposter 'Smerdis' a brother, Patizeithes, whom, he says, Cambyses left in charge of his household when he went to Egypt, and who used his position to make possible his brother's impersonation. He further relates that the real 'Smerdis' was killed at Cambyses' orders by a Persian nobleman, Prexaspes, who after Cambyses' death confessed to the crime and at once took his own life, thus silencing the only witness. As to when the murder was done, again the sources differ, from before Cambyses left for Egypt to while he was sojourning there; and the place too varies, from somewhere wholly unspecified to a hunting-field near Susa or the Erythrean Sea. These variations, and Herodotus' odd statement that the pretender even bore the same name from birth as the dead prince, suggest that there were persistent attempts to make the story seem more credible, which resulted in a confused web of gossip and speculation.

Yet no amount of embroidery or adaptation could conceal the essential weakness of Darius' tale,[8] which was the plain impossibility that Bardiya, son of Cyrus the Great, satrap of Media, Armenia and Cadusia,[9] and heir-presumptive to the Persian throne—a great prince, living surrounded by his own court—could have been murdered in such a way that his disappearance passed quite unnoticed. And to this impossibility is then to be added a second, that within a few months or years (according to whichever version one follows) another man could have passed himself off in place of this well known and evidently popular prince, resembling him so closely that all were deceived until after he was crown-

[7a] An ingenious reconciliation of Gaumāta (as meaning 'Bull-sized') and Tanyoxarces (as meaning 'Big of body') was proposed by I. Gershevitch in a paper read at a meeting of the British Institute of Persian Studies in London in June 1978.

[8] That it was wholly incredible was first stated by K. J. Beloch, Griechische Geschichte, 2nd ed., Strassburg 1914, II i, 44 n. Scepticism was again strongly expressed by Olmstead, 'Darius and his Behistun inscription', AJSL LV, 1938, 392-416 (summarized in his Persian Empire, 108-10), and by Nyberg, Historia Mundi III, 74-7. See also A. R. Burn, Persia and the Greeks, 91-3. Subsequently Dandamaev, op. cit. 108-35, scrutinised the story afresh in detail, and again found it false, seeing its background, however, in terms of social movements rather than individual ambition. Thereafter a lucid and forceful analysis of its weaknesses was made by E. J. Bickerman and H. Tadmor, 'Darius I, Pseudo-Smerdis and the magi', Athenaeum (University of Pavia), LVI, 1978, 239-61 (q.v. pp. 413-5 for a review by Bickerman of Dandamaev's book).

[9] So Xenophon, Cyropaedia VIII.7.11. (See further Olmstead, AJSL LV 396 n. 13; Dandamaev, op. cit., 117.)

ed. Then, according to Darius, the usurper sought to secure his position by putting many to death, and so became much dreaded. Yet when Darius, as he tells us, killed this feared tyrant, instead of being welcomed as a deliverer he stirred up general revolt against himself. Even without the existence of contradictory versions, the impossibilities and inconsistencies implicit in his own story are too striking for it to be credible.

What lies behind the story can never now be ascertained. Nothing is known of the real Bardiya, apart from the facts that during Cambyses' three-year absence in Egypt he gained general good-will and used it to usurp his brother's throne. Darius and his small band of followers may have had personal reasons for hating or despising him; or Darius may simply have desired power and felt himself the better man to wield it. Events certainly proved his outstanding gifts, both for conquering and ruling; and the interesting point is that he should have felt the need to concoct—or accept the concoction—of this strange story, rather than simply relying on his achievements to justify him. The reason lies presumably in the veneration felt for the memory of Cyrus, the founder of the empire, and in the profound Persian respect—attested at various levels throughout the Achaemenian period—for legitimate succession, for the descent of office (of whatever kind) in divinely ordered fashion from father to son. From this point of view Darius' claim to the throne was singularly weak, for not only was he only remotely kin to Cyrus, but (as he himself states in a later inscription),[10] his grandfather and father were then both still living, he being only twenty-eight when he seized the crown. In these circumstances he seems to have felt the need to disguise his regicide and justify his act of usurpation.

This need appears then to explain also the numerous slanders against Cambyses which circulated under Darius and his successors, unchecked and probably even fostered by the Persian authorities in Egypt; for clearly Darius' own story, that Cambyses had had his brother secretly murdered, gained in plausibility if that king could be shown in general to have been violent, cruel and unpredictable. For students of English history a parallel readily suggests itself with the case of Henry VII, whose claim to the throne was similarly slight, and who, having killed the lawful king, Richard III, in battle, proceeded to justify his rebellion and seizure of the crown by traducing Richard's memory with accusations of bastardy and murder—accusations which, thanks to his able propagandists, became a part of standard popular belief. The reason why

[10] DSf 12-15 (Kent, Old Persian, 142).

Henry's propaganda, like that of Darius, was effective is clearly that both men were victors and founders of dynasties. Darius was destined to rule, strongly and well, for thirty-five years, and to found a line of kings who reigned over the Persian Empire for nearly two centuries. So no one who had the interest and knowledge to question his version of events, then or thereafter, could have done so publicly and lived.

A striking proof of the power of the absolute ruler to command silence is furnished by the fact that Darius sought to legitimize his position by marrying the dead Bardiya's queens, among whom was Atossa, daughter of Cyrus and sister-wife of both Cambyses and Bardiya. This act has indeed been adduced as proof of the truth of the 'Gaumāta' story, on the grounds that it is unthinkable that this lady, a proud Achaemenian princess, should have consented to wed her brother's murderer. But this is a two-edged argument, since it can also be urged that it is unthinkable that she should have earlier submitted to marriage with a man whom she of all people must instantly have seen to be an imposter. Presumably Atossa knew the 'Gaumāta' story to be a fabrication but had only two choices: to acquiesce in the fiction and become the Queen of queens of a very remarkable man, able to give her great power and position, or to die young. It is hardly surprising that she (whom later events show to have had her own share of Achaemenian energy and ambition) should have chosen the former course.

The religious implications in the story

These matters all belong in large measure to the political sphere; and indeed there have been historians of Achaemenian religion who have passed them over in silence. Yet there are various ways in which they concern students of Zoroastrianism. Thus one reason why a number of modern scholars have been disposed to believe the 'Gaumāta' story is that to disbelieve it is to attribute a whole series of black deeds to Darius; and yet already in the Behistun inscription that king is to be found uttering strong religious and moral sentiments (although these are more numerous and individual in his later inscriptions). Thus he declares there: 'For this reason Ahuramazda bore (me) aid, and the other gods who are, because I was not faithless, I was not wicked, I was not false in my actions ...I acted according to what was right. Neither to the weak nor to the powerful did I do wrong';[11] and he repeatedly characterizes the uprisings against himself as inspired by Drauga, which is the Old Persian equivalent of Avestan Drug, the principle of falsehood and wickedness which Zoroaster saw directly opposed to Aša. Thus it seems that if Darius is to be regarded as a regicide and a liar, he must also be seen as a hypocrite—a bad character to be borne at the outset of his reign by one who through his achievements as soldier and statesman, lawgiver and administrator, was to earn himself the proud title of 'the Great'.[12]

[11] DB IV.61-5 (ibid., 129).

It has to be kept in mind, however, that since the Iranians had no tradition of their own of royal inscriptions, Darius and his counsellors necessarily drew in such matters on conventions inherited from the ancient civilizations of the Near East; and it is in the mould of those conventions that the text of the Behistun inscription is cast.[13] Thus the Assyrian kings, for example, invariably castigated their enemies as wicked, and 'sinning against Assur';[14] and they as regularly lauded their own virtues as upright men and servants of the gods, who therefore granted them success in battles: 'I, Sargon, guardian of Justice, who do not transgress against Assur and Shamash ... through their established consent I attained my heart's desire, I stood victorious over haughty foes'.[15] Darius had triumphed, therefore Ahuramazda, his god, had clearly looked with favour on him, and the rest followed as a matter of convention. Even the phrase 'the other gods who are', which occurs only here among all the Old Persian inscriptions, suggests the influence of alien scribal convention, with a customary tribute to the nameless gods of the conquered, who had not chosen to defend their own peoples.[16]

To see convention and political expediency in these utterances is not to cast doubt on Darius' character as a devout Zoroastrian. There is no question but that he was a highly ambitious and determined man, resolved to win himself a crown even if he had to play most foully for it; but he himself could doubtless read God's approval in his own success,

[12] There are therefore those who still argue for the acceptance of Darius' story, or even still assume its veracity without discussion. See most recently F. Altheim and R. Stiehl, Die aramäische Sprache unter den Achaimeniden, Frankfurt-am-Main 1960, 75-105; W. Hinz, Darius und die Perser, Baden-Baden 1976, 122 ff.; and J. Wiesehöfer, Der Aufstand Gaumātas und die Anfänge Dareios' I, Bonn 1978 (with good bibliography).

[13] This has been repeatedly stressed by Assyriologists who have concerned themselves with Achaemenian studies, see, with references, Dandamaev, op. cit., 76, 85-8. The Behistun reliefs (see the next chapter) suggest that at the beginning of Darius' reign strong influence came from Urartian civilization, presumably through the intermediary of Media; and Urartu had itself derived much from Assyria. On the role of Urartu with regard to scribal usages see with references Dandamaev, op. cit., 61 with nn. 234, 235; and add I. M. Diakonov, W. B. Henning Mem. Vol., London 1970, 121; O. Szemerényi, art. cit. in n. 5.

[14] See, e.g., LAR II 155, 252, 579, 595.

[15] LAR II 156.

[16] No exact parallel to this phrase (which occurs in DB IV.61, 62-3) seems attested in known Near Eastern texts, but it can nevertheless be regarded as 'translation Akkadian', see J. V. Kinnier Wilson apud I. Gershevitch, JNES XXIII, 1964, 35.

and later the initial, necessary misdeeds could be outweighed by acts of positive piety and justice, which (according to Zoroastrian doctrine) would redress the balance of 'aša' in the world, and give hope for the salvation of his own soul. (So the English Henry VII, to pursue that parallel further, having also ruled long and on the whole well, showed his piety and sought eternal blessedness by building a chapel which is one of the architectural glories of Christendom.) Indeed, Herodotus recounts an incident which shows Darius subsequently dealing in this world as he doubtless hoped himself to be dealt with hereafter: he had had a judge, one Sandoces, crucified, 'because he had given unjust judgment for a bribe. But Sandoces having been hung on the cross, Darius found a reckoning that his good services to the royal house were more than his offences ... and so set Sandoces free'.[17]

The significance of the 'Magus'

There are, further, a number of points of interest for religious history in the story of Gaumāta, fabrication though this appears to be. One is that the pretender is identified as a magus, while being clearly at the same time a man of high position in secular life. Subsequently, as we have seen, Herodotus, re-telling the tale, gives him a brother, one Patizeithes, whom Cambyses (he says) left in charge of his household when he went to Egypt.[18] Aeschylus in his *Persians* numbers a magus called Arabus among the Persian dead at Salamis;[19] and, taken together, Gaumāta and Patizeithes and Arabus (or their counterparts in real life) afford Persian parallels to the Egyptian Udja-Hor-resenet, who was a member of the hereditary priesthood of Sais, but embraced a diversity of lay callings—admiral of the fleet, physician, court chamberlain. Hereditary priesthoods inevitably produce men who, despite their upbringing, choose not to practise as priests. Modern Zoroastrianism furnishes many examples, one of the best known being Jamshedji Tata, a captain of Indian industry, who was a priest by birth and early training, and who had his sons initiated as priests, although like him they subsequently spent their lives in secular pursuits. He and they were thus entitled to call themselves priests (using the title ērvad), just as Gaumāta and Patizeithes and Arabus were entitled to be called magi. The priesthood being the learned estate in ancient Iran it evidently supplied society not only with working priests but also with judges, administrators and even—rather

[17] VII.194.
[18] III.61.
[19] L.318.

more surprisingly—military commanders. This seems to have made it difficult for the scribes to render Gaumāta's title into Elamite or Akkadian, and no equivalent for it is provided in the parallel versions of the Behistun inscriptions.[20]

In this connection it is interesting to note that in the relief which accompanies Darius' inscription at Behistun, 'Gaumāta' is represented wearing the Persian robe, and not the horseman's garb usually regarded as characteristic of a magus.[21] This can be understood as showing him in his supposed impersonation of Bardiya; or it can be held to substantiate the theory that the latter dress was worn by working priests only, so that there was no need to clothe the conquered 'Gaumāta' in it to establish visually what was claimed to be his true identity.

One odd characteristic of ancient Iranian practice, first attested in the Behistun inscription, is that in such formal declarations priests (like judges, scribes and others with a profession or office) were identified simply by their given name and calling. Thus Gaumāta the Magus is matched in Sasanian times by Tansar the Hērbad and Kirdēr the Mōbad. (The strength of the hereditary principle in ancient Iran makes it very probable that Kirdēr was in fact Tansar's son; but this must remain supposition, for even in his own inscriptions the great Sasanian priest confines himself to his titles, making no mention of his parentage.)

Another interesting point about Gaumāta the Magus is that there is no suggestion in Darius' words that he was other than a Persian. He made his initial claim to the throne in Persia,[22] and he was (we are told) unquestioningly accepted as a son of Cyrus by the Persian people. His only connection with Media in the Behistun account is that he is said to have died there; but the actual assassination of Bardiya took place in September, a time of year which, it has been pointed out, it was usual for Achaemenian kings to spend on the Iranian plateau, with its pleasant autumn climate, before departing to their winter palaces in the plains.[23] The story of Gaumāta thus helps to establish the usage of the title 'magus' in the Achaemenian period as meaning a member of the hereditary priesthood, without ethnic implications.[24]

[20] See Dandamaev, op. cit., 143 n. 598.
[21] See H. Luschey, 'Studien zu dem Darius-Relief von Bisutun', AMI N.F.I, 1968, 74 with Pls 28, 39.1; Hinz, Funde und Forschungen, Pl. 31a; and cf. above, pp. 20-1.
[22] See Dandamaev, op. cit., 134; and for the literature on the place-name Paišiyāuvāda ibid., 133 with no. 553, to which add Luschey, art. cit., 66-7; Wiesehöfer, op. cit. in n. 12.
[23] See Dandamaev, op. cit., 137.
[24] See above, pp. 19-20. Messina, Ursprung, 76ff., argued strongly (mainly on the basis of the Greek texts) that the Achaemenian magi were not an ethnic group, but members of a priestly calling. The existence and importance of Median magi must, however, be recognized, see e.g., Nyberg, Rel., 336, and Ch. IV, above; and throughout the known periods of its history the Zoroastrian priesthood has been a hereditary one.

Why Darius—or his advisers—should have cast a magus for the role of usurper must remain a matter for conjecture; but conceivably this could be linked with the convention of naming a priest simply by his calling, which meant that there was no need to identify him more closely by fabricating a lineage for him.[25] The name 'Gaumāta' is attested elsewhere in Achaemenian Persia,[26] so that 'Gaumāta the Magus' may have been as vague an identification as, say, 'John the Priest'. Rather more cogently it has been argued that to the laity the priesthood (living somewhat apart, with an esoteric training and in some cases mysterious powers) would have seemed the proper section of society to produce a man capable of passing himself off as another person; and so the story would have been the more credible to the common people.[27]

In Herodotus' version of the tale, with its two magi, the usurper resembles Bardiya so closely that he can only be distinguished from him with certainty because 'for some grave reason' he had had his ears cut off in the lifetime of Cyrus.[28] He had therefore to wear a turban day and night; but one of the ladies of his court is persuaded to feel for his ears while he sleeps, and so his secret is discovered.[29] The story had thus developed folkloric elements by the mid fifth century, which shows how widely it had been given currency.[30]

The Magophonia

A further elaboration in Herodotus' account is that he describes the two magi as Medes, and gives a political edge to the struggle to overthrow them, as being partly in order to prevent Media regaining her former ascendancy. This was presumably his own, or a contemporary, interpretation of the story, in harmony with the definition of the 'magoi' as a Median priestly clan. He then makes a statement which has been the cause of great scholarly debate. He sets the killing of the two magi in Susa, in his day thought of as a Persian capital; and he says that when Darius and the six nobles who were his companions—the 'few men' of the Behistun inscription—had done the deed, they cut off the heads of the magi and carried them into the streets, 'calling all Persians to aid, telling them what they had done, and showing the heads; at the same

[25] Cf. Dandamaev, op. cit., 119.
[26] See Hallock, Fortification Tablets, 708 s.v. Kammada; Gershevitch, 'Amber at Persepolis', 198; Mayrhofer, OnP, 8.720, 8.724.
[27] See Bickerman-Tadmor, art. cit. in n. 8, 248 ff.
[28] III.69.
[29] On a Greek origin for this embellishment of the tale see A. Demandt, 'Die Ohren des falschen Smerdis', Iran. Ant. 9, 1972, 94-101.
[30] See Bickerman-Tadmor, loc.cit.

time they killed every magus that came in their way. Then the Persians, when they heard from the seven what had been done, and how the magi had tricked them, resolved to follow the example set, and drew their daggers and slew all the magi they could find. If nightfall had not stayed them, they would not have left one alive. The Persians observe this day with one accord, and keep it more strictly than any other in the whole year. It is then that they hold the great festival which they call the "Magophonia". No magus may show himself abroad during the whole time that the feast lasts; but all must remain at home the entire day'.[31]

Even were Herodotus the sole source for the story of the usurping Magus, this part of his narrative would be hard to accept—that on one day in every year a whole estate of the Persian realm, from high ecclesiastics and royal judges down to the numerous family priests, should be thus insulted and confined; and since in fact his story can be tested against the Behistun account, it can be seen to be fiction; for Darius tells only of the killing of a single Magus, with his own chief followers, and that in Media, where there could be no question of enflaming the local populace against 'Median' magi. What the basis for Herodotus' version was remains a matter for conjecture; but he himself certainly saw the whole episode as partly political, with resentful Persians slaughtering representatives of the once dominant Medes; and in this he was followed by other Greek writers, and has provided a basis for the interpretation of the Bardiya-Gaumāta story by several modern scholars.[32]

That there was actually an annual feast-day whose name could be rendered in Greek as Magophonia is corroborated, however, by Ctesias, who lived for seventeen years at the Achaemenian court. He wrote, in the fourth century: 'The feast of the Magophonia is celebrated by the Persians on the day upon which Sphendadates the Magus was put to death'.[33] Why Gaumāta should here have become Spentōdāta it seems useless to speculate;[34] but in other respects this brief statement accords with Darius' narrative, in that the death of only one Magus is mentioned. It seems possible, therefore, that Darius, as part of his propaganda, did in fact brazenly found a feast to celebrate 'the killing of the Magus' (rather than 'the murder of the magi'[35]), which was virtually an annual

[31] III.79.
[32] Thus Nyberg, Historia Mundi III, 76-7, saw Darius as a Persian leading a movement against the sons of Cyrus, who naturally (he thought) had the support of the Median magi, since Cyrus himself, according to Herodotus, was half Mede by blood.
[33] Frag. 15 (König, Ktesias, 8).
[34] For references to discussions see Dandamaev, op. cit., 111 nn., 453, 454.
[35] This is an appropriate rendering of the Sogdian word 'mwgzt', used of the slaughter of Iranian priests by Alexander, see Henning, JRAS 1944, 133-6 with Dandamaev, op. cit., 138-9.

celebration of his own seizure of power, and so continued to be observed in Persia proper under all the kings of his line.

For English people a parallel suggests itself with Guy Fawkes' Day, the annual celebration, maintained now for over three hundred years, of the death of a man who tried to blow up king and parliament. This celebration became popular because it was established at the season of an ancient autumn fire-festival, whose rites it took over; and there have been suggestions that the Magophonia too was made to coincide with a popular feast, namely *Mithrakāna, since both, it seems, were held in September.[36] This would accord with Herodotus' statements about the great holiness of the Magophonia. Yet *Mithrakāna was far too beloved and important an observance to lose its own name and identity, and in fact it is known not to have done so. The matter continues therefore to be problematic.

The āyadanā

In the Behistun inscription Darius, having told of the killing of Gaumāta, continues: 'The kingdom which had been taken away from our family, that I put in its place; I re-established it on its foundation. As before, so I made the places of worship (āyadanā) which Gaumāta the Magus destroyed. I restored to the people the pastures and the herds, the servants and the houses which Gaumāta the Magus took away from them'.[37] These statements appear to belong to a general category of utterance, repeatedly attested in Mesopotamian history, whereby a king who has come irregularly to the throne establishes his right to rule by listing the wrongs perpetrated by his predecessor, which he declares himself to have amended. They are therefore not necessarily to be taken literally. There are, in fact, no indications of unrest or troubles in the land during Bardiya's brief rule; and since Bardiya was himself an Achaemenian, not the representative of an alien dynasty, and since 'Gaumāta' is supposed to have passed himself off as Bardiya, there could be no reason, historical or fictive, for either of them to destroy existing 'places of worship', or to deprive subjects whom they needed to conciliate of their possessions and homes.

Yet even if the destruction of 'āyadanā' is imaginary, the occurrence of the word is interesting, and a large literature exists about what precisely it meant.[38] The Akkadian and Elamite versions of Darius' inscription have here standard words for temples, i.e. 'houses of the gods'; [39] and some have argued from this that the early Achaemenians too must have possessed consecrated buildings. But archaeologists have failed to find any traces that could be interpreted as such, not only at Pasargadae but also at Darius' Persepolis; and this, together with Herodotus' statement that still in his day the Persians had no temples, suggests that they had not then changed their tradition of worshipping by household fire or in the open air.[40] Presumably therefore the word 'āyadana-', deriving from the verbal base *yad*, 'to sacrifice, worship', meant a place of worship such as the precinct at Pasargadae, with its two great plinths, or the walled mound at Zela, or indeed any place (such as the foot of Mt. *Bagastāna) to which there was regular resort for sacrifice and prayer. The fact that the plinths at Pasargadae show no signs of early damage accords with the assumption that Darius' accusations of ravage and destruction by his predecessor were purely formal; and the Elamite and Akkadian equivalents for 'āyadanā' presumably merely represent what those using these languages understood as 'places of worship' suitable for spoliation.[41]

[36] For the literature on this see Dandamaev, op. cit., 138 nn., 575, 576. Against associating Bāgayādiš with *Mithrakāna see above, p. 24.

[37] DB I.61-6. There has been much philological discussion about the precise meanings of the four OP words describing what Gaumāta deprived the people of, see Dandamaev, op. cit., 187-98; Hinz, Neue Wege, Ch. IV, s.v.

[38] For this see Dandamaev, op. cit., 234 ff.

[39] See ibid., 235-6.

[40] Against the interpretation of the Nush-i Jan building with its altar as a Median fire temple see above, pp. 36-7 with p. 52; and against the attempt to identify the sites of 19 fire temples in Pars in the early Achaemenian period see below, p. 136.

[41] It is established that the Elamite version of the Behistun inscription is in fact the primary one, set down as the written record of a dictated OP text; see L. Trümpelmann, Archäologischer Anzeiger 3, 1967, 281 ff.; H. Luschey, AMI N.F. I, 1968, 91-3; W. Hinz, ibid., 95-8; I. Gershevitch, TPS 1979, 114 ff. — The substance of the lecture by I. Gershevitch on Gaumāta (see above, p. 80 n. 7a) is in press as an article for AAH. In this the author, with his customary learning and ingenuity, has sought to reconcile all versions of the story, arguing that because they can thus (in his opinion) be reconciled, the story itself should be accepted.

CHAPTER SEVEN

DARIUS THE GREAT (522-486 B.C.)

The establishing of his rule

The first year of Darius' reign was thus one of hard fighting, as each of the lands ruled by Cyrus and Cambyses, Iranian and non-Iranian alike, strove again for independence; and it was by one of the great feats of arms in history that he and his generals succeeded in subduing them all. Egypt was the last to be reconquered; and thereafter, in intermittent campaigns, Darius extended the bounds of the Achaemenian Empire to their furthest extent, so that in the end he could proclaim: 'This is the kingdom which I hold, from the Scythians who are beyond Sogdiana, thence unto Ethiopia; from Sind, thence unto Sardis'.[1]

For his title to rule over non-Iranians, the lesser breeds of 'anarya', Darius was content to rely on right by conquest. Thus on a surviving stele he states simply: 'I am a Persian. From Persia I seized Egypt'.[2] But among the Medes and Persians themselves he strove in diverse ways to strengthen his claim to rule as an Achaemenian in due succession to Cyrus, the great founder of the empire.[3] He fostered therefore the traditions of his predecessors, and maintained their pious institutions. So the daily and monthly rites were continued at the tomb of Cyrus, and the terms of Cyrus' charter to the priests of Apollo on the Meander were duly honoured.[4] It must, moreover, have been Darius who began or adopted the royal custom of going to Pasargadae after being crowned for a religious service of initiation, during which the new king put on a robe once worn by Cyrus. This remained usage for each of his successors, being in fact first recorded for Artaxerxes II;[5] but it is most unlikely that it was one of them who revived or instituted such an observance. For them, heirs to Darius, the founder of their line, it would have had little symbolic significance; but for Darius himself it must have been yet another way to declare to the Iranians that he ruled legitimately as the kinsman of Cyrus, and not simply as a usurper, by force of arms.[6]

[1] DPh 3-8 (Kent, Old Persian, 136-7).
[2] DZc 7-8 (ibid., 147).
[3] Or, as he reckons in, e.g., DB I.8-11, as the ninth in the Achaemenian family to bear the title of king.
[4] See above, pp. 70-1, 47-8.
[5] Plutarch, Life of Artaxerxes, III; see further below, p. 209.
[6] On the symbolic importance of the king's robe see A. Shahbazi, 'An Achaemenid Symbol II', AMI N.F. XIII, 1980, 119-47. For the robe worn by Darius himself and his successors see A. B. Tilia, Studies and Restorations II, 53-5 with Fig. 6.

Darius further strengthened his claim to legitimate possession of the throne by his marriage to Atossa, daughter of Cyrus. He also took to wife her younger sister, Artystone, as well as an unnamed daughter of Bardiya's.[7] (Cambyses, Heredotus records, left no issue.) Yet another of his queens, who like Atossa had before been wedded to Cambyses and Bardiya, was a daughter of a Persian nobleman, Utāna;[8] and it is an indication of the cross-currents and complexities of the times that Utāna was himself one of those who aided Darius in killing Bardiya.

The six noble conspirators and the six Ameša Spentas

Darius himself names the six Persians who joined with him in the assassination in the following terms: 'These are the men who were there at the time when I slew Gaumāta the Magus who called himself Bardiya; at that time these men strove together as my followers. Vindafarnah . . . Utāna . . . Gaubaruva . . . Vidarna . . . Bagabukhša . . .Ardumaniš . . . Thou who shalt be king hereafter, protect well the family of these men'.[9] Herodotus in his account gives the Greek equivalents of the first five names as Intaphernes, Otanes, Gobryas, Hydarnes and Megabyzus. Only the sixth is different, Aspathines instead of a rendering of Ardumaniš. One suggested explanation of this is that Ardumaniš (who is not mentioned except in this one passage of the Behistun inscription) may have died either in the actual attack on Bardiya or soon afterwards. In the carving over his tomb Darius had himself represented flanked by six nobles; and inscriptions identify the first two as Gaubaruva and Aspačana, the latter being presumably the Aspathines of Herodotus. According to the Greek historian, Aspathines had a son called Prexaspes; and this makes it very probable that he was himself the son of the Prexaspes who was (according to Herodotus) the reputed killer of Bardiya,[10] advanced, it would seem, into the ranks of the six in place of Ardumaniš. His own loyalty to Darius was perhaps genuine from the outset, perhaps secured initially by this high honour.

Three of the six—Vidarna, Vindafarnah and Gaubaruva—are said in the Behistun inscription to have led Darius' armies during the first

[7] Herodotus III.88.
[8] Ibid., III.68. Dandamaev, Persien, 159 with n. 677, identified Otanes as an Achaemenian, the brother of Cyrus' queen Cassandane, because Herodotus names the fathers of both Pharnaspes; but Darius, the better authority, gives Utāna's father's name as Thukhra.
[9] DB IV.80-8. On Herodotus' divergent account, that Darius was only one of the seven, elected later by omen to be king, see with bibliography K. Bringmann, 'Die Verfassungsdebatte bei Herodot 3.80-82 . . .', Hermes 104, 1976, 266-79. Cf. also F. Geschnitzer, Die sieben Perser und das Königtum Darius, Heidelberg 1977.
[10] See Herodotus III.70, VII.97, with Justi, Namenbuch, 46.

fateful year of his reign;[11] and Utāna or Otanes, Herodotus records, later commanded a Persian force which took the Greek island of Samos.[12] Darius showed his gratitude to the six by according special privileges to them and their descendants.[13] He also rewarded them with lavish grants of lands. Otanes received his share in Cappadocia, and his descendants held these, virtually as vassal kings, until the coming of Alexander.[14] In Pontus too in the Hellenic period the royal family still traced its line 'from one of the seven Persians'.[15] The tradition that there were seven great families in the realm—that of the king and six others—whose fortunes were linked by tradition, by position, and by inter-marriage, became so firmly established in the Achaemenian period that the theory at least was maintained in both the succeeding Iranian empires.

The importance of this for an account of Zoroastrianism is that Darius undoubtedly exploited an accident of history for the purposes of religious and political propaganda: that is to say, he used the fact that the Persian Empire was ruled by a king who had had six noble helpers to draw an analogy between it and the kingdom of heaven, ruled by Ahuramazda with the six great Ameša Spentas; and thus he was able to suggest that there was a divinely inspired order and pattern in this state of affairs. That his kingship was divinely ordained he claims again and again in his inscriptions, for example in the following passage: 'Unto Ahuramazda thus was the desire, he chose me as (his) man in all the earth; he made me king in all the earth. I worshipped Ahuramazda. Ahuramazda bore me aid. What by me was commanded to do, that he made successful for me. What I did, all by the will of Ahuramazda I did'. Another passage runs: 'A great god is Ahuramazda ... who made Dārayavahu king, one king of many, one lord of many'.[16] This thought of the one god and the one king could readily be expressed in words, for there were existing patterns in Mesopotamian formulas; but the new idea of an earthly heptad as a counterpart to a divine one found expression visually.[17] Two examples have survived, in stone and metalwork.

[11] DB II.19, IV.83, V.7.

[12] IV.141.

[13] The one exception was Intaphernes, who according to Herodotus (III.118-9) presumed too far and was put to death by Darius. But the king spared his eldest son, so that the family continued.

[14] See with references Dandamaev, op. cit., 159-60.

[15] See ibid., 160 n. 679.

[16] DSf 15-22 (Kent, Old Persian, 142); DNa 1-8 (ibid., 137).

[17] That it also found expression verbally (in the phrase 'the other gods who are') has been argued by Gershevitch, JNES XXIII, 1963, 17 ff., who took this to refer to the Ameša Spentas; but cf. above, p. 83 with n. 16. For a study from an unusual angle, in connection with the Achaemenian inscriptions, of the 'creations' which the Ameša Spentas guard see Cl. Herrenschmidt, 'Les créations d'Ahuramazda, essai sur la royauté perse impériale', Studia Iranica V, 1976, 33-65.

The example in stone is to be found in the carving already mentioned above Darius' tomb—a carving which was to be repeated over the tomb of every one of his successors.[18] In this the heads of the six noble families are shown standing on each side of the king, facing inwards towards him.[19] The three ranged behind him are armed, but the three who face him are weaponless and stand in an attitude of ritual mourning, raising the left hand, covered by the sleeve, towards the mouth.[20] The grouping thus of the six around the king seems intended to mirror the grouping of the six Ameša Spentas around Ahuramazda, with the three unarmed mourners, in their gentler role, reflecting the three female divinities.[21] As it is said in a Pahlavi text: 'Ohrmazd the Lord ... himself dwells in the Endless Light ...; and Vahman, Ardvahišt and Shahrevar stand at his right hand, Spendārmad, Hordād and Amurdād at his left'.[22]

The example in metal is provided by a pair of exquisite Achaemenian earrings, made of gold cloisonné inlaid with carnelian, turquoise and lapis lazuli.[23] On each, a large central roundel contains the bust of a bearded figure with high, fluted headgear, who holds a flower in one hand and raises the other in salutation. He has two pairs of upward curving wings, and emerges from a composite symbol of crescent moon and sun disk.[24] A decorative band encircles this figure, and on either side of him are placed symmetrically three smaller figures, facing inwards towards him. They are identical with one another, and closely resemble the central figure, except that they have no wings and rise from a simple crescent.

This striking composition cannot, it has been pointed out, represent Ahuramazda himself with the six Ameša Spentas, since three of the latter were conceived of as female; and so it presumably depicts the khvarenah

[18] On the tomb itself and its sculptures see further below.

[19] See Schmidt, Persepolis III 86, with Pls 19, 23, 24, 45, 60, 61.

[20] This gesture is still made by Parsi priests when they recite the confession for the dead.

[21] See Shahbazi, Persepolis Illustrated, 73, who was the first to see the parallelism. That the six flanking figures, with Darius, represented the seven 'great families', appears to have been first proposed by F. J. Tritsch, JHS LXII, 1942, 106. P. Calmeyer, AMI VIII, 1975, 95-6, seems alone in taking these figures, not independently, but together with the double ranks of soldiers and mourners aligned with them on the side-walls (see, e.g., Schmidt, op. cit., 87, 100); but one of his arguments for doing so was that, because Aspačana is shown in 'Median' costume, he must have been a Mede, and hence could not represent one of the six noble Persians; and this has since been shown to be fallacious, cf. above, pp. 10, 20-1.

[22] GBd.XXXVI.8 (BTA 212/3).

[23] The earrings are identical. For some of the literature concerning them see A. B. Tilia, op. cit. in n. 6, p. 39 n. 2. The one in the Boston Museum of Fine Arts (reproduced in colour, ibid., Pl. C, opp. p. 40) has been discussed in detail by J. F. X. McKeon, 'Achaemenian Cloisonné-inlay Jewellery ...', Orient and Occident: Essays presented to Cyrus H. Gordon, ed. H. A. Hoffner, Neukirchen-Vleyn, 1973, 109-19. [Add A. Shahbazi, AMI N.F. XIV, 1981, in press.]

[24] Both symbols are discussed below.

or 'fortune' of the Achaemenian king and the heads of the six noble families, shown as a heptad corresponding to the greater divine one.[25] The earrings have been assigned on technical grounds to the late fifth or early fourth century,[26] and so present this concept, evolved in the time of Darius, persisting under his successors. To give it visual expression was undoubtedly a bold piece of religio-political propaganda; but no bolder than that of the Sasanian Ardašir I, who allowed himself to be represented confronting Ohrmazd in an investiture-scene carved on the rock-face at Naqš-i Rustam.[27] There the king, on horseback, tramples the Parthian Ardaban V in the dust, while Ohrmazd, likewise mounted, crushes Ahriman beneath his horse's hooves. So here another rebel-king sought to establish a parallel between his actions and the divine ones, striving to show that he, like God himself, was the champion of right and had destroyed the earthly wrongdoer—that is, his legitimate overlord.

Darius' tomb sculpture has a further element of doctrinal interest, in that the king with his six companions reflects a divine heptad in which Ahuramazda and the Holy Spirit, Spenta Mainyu, are seen as one. Elsewhere in the Achaemenian period the king appears with seven counsellors,[28] an earthly reflection of Ahuramazda surrounded by Spenta Mainyu with the six Ameša Spentas. Both interpretations of doctrine are to be found in Zoroastrian literature, from the Gathas onward.

The Behistun relief

It was probably a little while before Darius' priests, pondering the events of his accession, were struck by the parallelism between his six helpers and the six Ameša Spentas, and worked this out; and there is no trace of the analogy in the earliest sculpture of his reign, that which was carved on the sacred Mt. *Bagastāna or Behistun. This relief and the accompanying Elamite text appear to have been engraved as a harmonious whole, with the Babylonian and Old Persian versions of the text being added subsequently, all, it is thought, between 521 and 519.[29] The sculpture itself is impressive in its size, being 5½ m. (18 ft.) high, 'about as large as any ancient Western Asiatic stone-carver—used to relatively small reliefs—could possibly conceive'.[30] Yet such is the loftiness of the mountain-side that, seen from the highway that passes by

[25] See Shahbazi, art. cit. in n. 6; and for the *khvarenah*-symbolism see further below.
[26] See McKeon, art. cit.
[27] See Survey, IV, Pl. 154A.
[28] For references see D. M. Lewis, Sparta and Persia, 22-3 with nn.
[29] See H. Luschey, 'Studien zu dem Darius-Relief von Bisutun', AMI N.F. I, 1960, 63-94, with further bibliography, above, p. 89 n. 40
[30] E. Porada, Ancient Iran, 142.

its foot, it appears quite small, and there is no possibility of reading the inscriptions. Both text and carving, it seems, were set at that height for the eyes of the divine beings who were regularly invoked to visit this 'place of the gods'. Such an act was in ancient Near Eastern tradition, for it has been remarked that when Assyrian scribes drew up the records of royal campaigns to be carved on stone, this was done not only to glorify the king but also to make report on his behalf to Assur and the other gods, the true victors over his foes; and on a statue of himself Shalmaneser III had inscribed an account of his conquests and campaigns which ends with these words: 'This statue ... whose artistic features are most beautiful to look upon I have had modelled and mounted before Adad, my lord, in the hope that whenever Adad, my lord, is moved to look at it, he may be so pleased as (again) to order and ordain for me the lengthening of my days and the multiplying of my years, and may daily command the removal of all affliction from me'.[31]

The sculpture at Behistun presents Darius accordingly with prominence and dignity, towering in stature above the two men who attend him, carrying his lance and arrows.[32] He stands in a victor's pose, his left foot resting on the prostrate 'Gaumāta', who holds his arms up in vain supplication. Darius, ignoring him, looks serenely forward, bow in his left hand, his right raised in a gesture of salutation. Facing him, but below the level of his gaze, is a line of nine captives, roped together, their hands bound behind them—the defeated leaders who rose against Darius when he seized the throne.

This relief seems inspired by the ancient rock-carving at Sar-i Pul, further to the west along the Khorasan Highway;[33] but there the Lullubi king stands facing the goddess Ishtar, who holds two of his captives in leash. Centuries later, after Anāhiti had been officially assimilated into the Zoroastrian pantheon, and after the Iranians had grown accustomed to representations of their yazatas in human form, the Sasanians were prepared to depict 'Anāhīd' together with their kings;[34] but in Darius' relief no Anāhiti replaces Ishtar. Instead, hovering in the air over the captives' heads, appears what has come to be regarded as a characteristic Zoroastrian religious symbol. The form which this takes in the Behistun carving is that of the upper part of a man within a winged

[31] J. V. Kinnier-Wilson, 'The kurba'il statue of Shalmaneser III', Iraq XXIV, 1962, 96; cited by Ann Farkas, Achaemenid Sculpture, 106.
[32] For detailed photographs and sketches see King and Thompson, The Sculptures and Inscriptions of Behistun; Luschey, art. cit.
[33] See above, p. 30.
[34] See Survey IV, Pl. 160B.

circle.[35] He wears Persian dress and has a long, square-cut 'Assyrian' beard. On his head is the high cylindrical crown worn by Mesopotamian gods, which is adorned with horns and an eight-rayed star above it—both ancient symbols of divinity.[36] He faces Darius and, like Ishtar at Sar-i Pul, holds in one hand the ring of divinity, while the other is raised in salutation in a gesture corresponding to the king's. The circle from which this dignified figure emerges has a pair of broad, blunt-ended wings outspread on either side, and a bird's tail beneath it. Two ribbon-like appendages float outwards on either side of the tail.

A falcon-disk is a symbol which, as we have seen, derives ultimately from Egypt, where it belonged to Horus, the sky- and sun-god.[37] From there it came to be widely adopted in other lands, it seems as a symbol of power and royalty; [38] and among the realms which made use of it was Assyria, where it appears on seals of the ninth century.[39] Here there was a special development of the symbol, with a human figure, crowned and bearded, being set within the winged disk, which thus became a circle. The figure regularly holds a bow in one hand and raises the other in salutation; and it was thus that the symbol was adopted, it appears, in Urartu, in a form closely resembling that of the Behistun monument. As far as the Iranians are concerned, the likelihood seems, therefore, that when the Deiocids founded their kingdom they too adopted this potent and generally recognized symbol of power, from either Assyria or Urartu, and that it was duly taken over from them by the Achaemenians [40]; but in all known Iranian examples the figure in the winged circle holds the ring of divinity, instead of the bow of Assyrian and Urartian tradition.

The figure in the winged circle on the Behistun monument has certainly an ancient, Mesopotamian look, with its towering crown and long 'Assyrian' beard; and Assyrian influence has been traced also in details of the hairstyle and garb of the human figures.[41] Darius himself wears a low crenellated crown; but around it is a richly adorned diadem, with a band of eight-pointed stars and plantlike motifs set between rows of pearls—

[35] For a detailed description see Luschey, art. cit., 80-2 with Taf. 34. A fine photograph taken earlier by G. G. Cameron was reproduced by Ghirshman, Persia, 229 (Pl. 278), and H. H. von der Osten, Die Welt der Perser, Pl. 46.

[36] See, with references, Luschey, art. cit., 81.

[37] See above, pp. 37-8.

[38] See Frankfort, cited above, p. 38 n. 138.

[39] See Frankfort, ibid., n. 139.

[40] Calmeyer, JdI 94, 1979, 363-4, sees rather in this a direct influence upon Darius by Urartian tradition; but it would be remarkable if such influence had been exerted so early in his reign. On the matter of Urartian influence on the character of his tomb (convincingly argued by the same scholar) see below, pp. 111-2.

[41] See Farkas, Achaemenid Sculpture, 31, 32.

a diadem whose origins have been traced to similarly adorned head-bands worn by Assyrian kings.[42] It seems probable, therefore, that the craftsman who designed the Behistun sculpture was trained in an Ecbatana school with strong Median, hence Urartian-Assyrian, traditions.[43] Thereafter Darius was to turn rather to the Elamite-Babylonian traditions of Persia proper; and he and his successors set many further representations of the winged symbol on later monuments. It is with the help of these (to be discussed later in this chapter) that one can hope to establish the meaning of this symbol for the Zoroastrians themselves.

Some of these other representations (notably those on palace walls) could readily be seen by many; and Darius evidently wished men as well as yazatas to behold the Behistun relief, for at least one copy of it is known. Fragments of this have been unearthed in Babylon, together with fragments of the accompanying Akkadian version of the text. There an impressive monument, made it seems not long after the original was carved at Behistun, was set on the processional way leading out of the Ishtar Gate of the city, so that all who used that gate passed close by it.[44] It is very probable that more than one such copy was made, so that this visual presentation of Darius' triumph is likely to have become widely known to the peoples of the empire.

The palaces of Darius and their sculptures

i) *Susa*

The two richest sources for Darius' inscriptions and sculptures are the ruins of his palaces at Susa and Persepolis. Cyrus had maintained Susa, the old western capital of the Elamites, as a centre of government, but is not known to have undertaken any new building there. Darius rebuilt the palace of the Elamite kings (devastated by Assurbanipal), and added an audience-hall and another impressive building upon the same terrace.[45] He commemorated the building of the palace with an inscription in which (once more following a tradition of Mesopotamian kings) he recorded that costly materials had been brought for it from the

[42] See Luschey, art. cit., 72 with Pl. 33; Tilia, Studies and Restorations II, 59-60 with Fig. 7; Porada, 'Achaemenid Art', 80-2.

[43] For discussion see Luschey, art. cit., 87 ff.

[44] See U. Seidl, 'Ein Relief Dareios' I in Babylon', AMI N.F. IX, 1976, 125-30.

[45] There is as yet no definitive publication on Achaemenian Susa. French expeditions have been excavating the site from 1883, and the first publication was that of M. Dieulafoy, L'acropole de Suse, Paris 1890. Subsequently see M. Pillet, Le palais de Darius I à Suse, Paris, 1914; R. de Macquenem et al., Archéologie susienne, Paris 1934, 3-119; and articles by J. Perrot, CRAIBL 1971, 352-78; Syria XLVIII, 1971, 46-51; Iran X, 1972, 183; XII, 1974, 217-18.

ends of his empire, and that craftsmen of subject-nations had laboured at the site—Babylonians and Egyptians, Ionians and Sardians as well as Iranians [46]—so that here, as in the armies of the Great King, there was a mingling of peoples.

Darius' audience hall was burnt down in the reign of his grandson, Artaxerxes I, but was rebuilt, it is thought in the original style, by Artaxerxes II. Like Cyrus at Pasargadae, Darius placed his building under the protection of benevolent genii, so that lion-griffins and winged bulls stride along the walls together with snarling lions, all portrayed in glazed and coloured brick. There are also pairs of opposed sphinxes, and decorative borders of rosettes and palms—all ancient motifs, which the Persians probably derived mostly from Elamite tradition.[47]

ii) *Persepolis*

While work was going on at Susa, Darius began the construction of a magnificent new palace-complex at Persepolis, some 80 km. (50 miles) to the south of Pasargadae, on the edge of the Marv Dasht. The ruins of the ancient Elamite capital of Anshan lie not far away.[48] The site which Darius chose was on the north-eastern border of the plain, where a mountain-spur ran out to form a rock-base for a huge stone terrace, which on one side was built up to over 17 m. (56 ft) above the ground level.[49] Unlike Pasargadae, the palace-area of Persepolis seems to have been planned as a defensible fortress, described by Darius in a foundation-inscription as 'secure and beautiful'.[50] Work on the terrace probably began about 519, and the king's desire for a strong citadel may reflect the early uncertainties of his reign.[51] (Later his son Xerxes made the terrace easily accessible from the town which grew up on the plain below by adding a great double-flighted stairway leading up to it.) The first building erected on the terrace, it is thought, was the treasury; and one suggestion for Darius' purpose in founding Persepolis is that he wanted a secure but magnificently imposing place in which to receive each year representatives from his subject-peoples, bearing tribute and

[46] DSf 22 ff. (Kent, Old Persian, 142-4).
[47] See Ghirshman, Persia, 140 ff.; Porada, Ancient Iran, 160; Farkas, Achaemenid Sculpture, 43-4.
[48] See above, p. 10.
[49] The chief work on Persepolis is E. F. Schmidt, Persepolis I-III, 1953-1970. For further bibliography down to 1978 see Tilia, op. cit., 94-9. On the terrace itself see ibid., Ch.1. The latest guide to the site is that of A. Shahbazi, Persepolis Illustrated.
[50] See Schmidt, Persepolis I, 62-3 (DPf).
[51] On the early chronology of Persepolis see ibid., 39, 42; Farkas, op. cit., 44-5. On the building periods of the terrace, Tilia, op. cit., 25-7.

presents which could be safely stored in this treasury. (Fort Shalmaneser appears to have served such a purpose at the Assyrian capital of Nimrud.[52]) Subsequently Xerxes had scenes of processions and present-bringing carved on the great staircases of Persepolis, and these have sculptured antecedents not only in Assyria but also in Elam and Urartu.[53]

All the buildings on the terrace—those of Darius and of his successors—are aligned on two axes intersecting at right angles; and it has been suggested that this alignment was to enable exact calendar observations to be made at Persepolis, these being of great importance for religious festivals.[54] Such observations would have depended on the position of the sun as it rose above the mountain behind the terrace; and, if the theory is sound, this has perhaps a bearing on the mountain's name, which appears in later times as Kūh-i Mihr, 'Mountain of Mithra' [55]—Mithra being, for the western Iranians in particular, a sun-god.

Apart from the treasury, the buildings begun by Darius are held to be the audience-hall (the Apadana) and a small palace (the Tačara). There is no trace of a religious sanctuary on the great terrace from his or any other reign. Although relatively few of the surviving buildings can be attributed to Darius, it seems that he established the themes and motifs of the sculptures at Persepolis, and that his successors in the main merely repeated these with refinements and variations. It is therefore legitimate to consider these sculptures as a whole rather than studying them as they were carved under individual rulers.

'The impress of Darius' personality' (it has been said) 'so noticeable in all the institutions of the Empire, is just as striking in his art. . . . Darius' sculpture is almost ruthlessly personal in its preoccupation with the figure of the king'.[56] The main doorway of the Tačara is adorned with a great carving showing Darius leaving the hall followed by two attendants (portrayed, as at Behistun, as smaller men).[57] The king wears his characteristic crenellated crown (the stone was originally, it is thought, gold-plated), while his robe was once brilliantly painted, with all the embroidered motifs picked out in colour—concentric circles, rosettes and

[52] See D. Oates, Iraq XXIV, 1962, 20-5.
[53] See Nylander, 'Al-Bērūnī and Persepolis', Comm. Cyrus I, Acta Iranica I, 1974, 147 with n. 41.
[54] See W. Lentz and W. Schlosser, 'Persepolis —Ein Beitrag zur Funktionsbestimmung', ZDMG Suppl. I, 1969, 957-83; W. Lentz, W. Schlosser and G. Gropp, 'Persepolis—Weitere Beiträge zur Funktionsbestimmung', ZDMG 121, 1971, 254-68; G. Gropp, 'Beobachtung in Persepolis' AMI N. F. IV, 1971, 25-49; J. George, paper read at the VIIIth Congress of Iranian Art and Archaeology, Munich 1976.
[55] See A. Shahbazi, 'From Parsa to Taxt-e Jamshid', AMI, N.F. X, 1977, 197-207.
[56] Farkas, op. cit., 3-4. Cf. in detail M. C. Root, Acta Iranica 19, 1979.
[57] See Tilia, op. cit., Pl. XXVIII (with notes).

palmettes, and a border of striding lions.[58] From other sculptures at Persepolis it appears that all the kings of Darius' line wore this royal robe,[59] being distinguished from one another in their idealised representations only by their individual crowns.[60]

The figure in the winged circle

It seems likely that the figure in a winged circle once appeared on the now vanished walls of the Tačara; but, probably by chance, the surviving occurrences of this symbol at Persepolis are all associated with Darius' grandson, Artaxerxes I. On each side of the northern doorway of the Tripylon or Central Palace (also called the Council Hall), which was built by this monarch, there are identical sculptures which show him, like Darius, as a stately figure followed by two smaller attendants. He carries a sceptre in one hand, a three-lobed flower in the other. One of the attendants holds a parasol over the king's head; and above it floats the winged symbol, essentially the same as that at Behistun, but with differences in detail.[61] The figure in the circle, which here faces the same way as the king, wears not the ancient cylindrical crown of Mesopotamian gods, as at Behistun, but one identical with the king's, which is high and slightly flared; and it is clad moreover in the royal robe. Like the Behistun figure, it holds the ring of divinity in one hand, and has the other raised in salutation. The wings differ from the Behistun ones in that their ends are tapered, not blunt; and the feathers, painted red and green, were, it seems, edged with another colour, probably gold, as were circles painted near their tips.[62] These details suggest that this particular form of the symbol was copied from pieces of cloisonné jewellery, showing the winged sun-disk, which were perhaps brought back from Egypt after Darius' re-conquest of that land.[63] Since the winged disk was an important symbol for the Iranians, such objects might be expected to have attracted their attention there.

[58] See Tilia, op. cit., 53-6 with fig. 6.

[59] See Tilia, op. cit., 55.

[60] See Tilia, op. cit., 60-6. On the Achaemenian crowns see H. von Gall, 'Die Kopfbedeckung des persischen Ornats bei den Achämeniden', AMI, N.F. VII. 1974, 145-61; P. Calmeyer, 'Zur Genese altiranischer Motive: IV. Persönliche Krone und Diadem', AMI, N.F. IX, 1976, 45-63; W. Eilers and P. Calmeyer, 'Vom Reisehut zur Kaiserkrone', AMI, N.F. X, 1977, 153-90.

[61] For the whole sculpture see Schmidt, Persepolis I, Pls 75-6; Tilia, op. cit., Pl. XXVII, Fig. 26.

[62] The use of colour on the winged symbol at Persepolis, first noticed by Herzfeld, was closely studied by Judith Lerner, and has been gone into in detail by G. and A. B. Tilia, see Tilia, op. cit., 31-9, with figures and plates, and especially Pl. B.

[63] See Tilia, op. cit., 38-9. An Egyptian origin for the Persepolis type of the winged symbol was first postulated by E. Porada, review of Schmidt's Persepolis II, JNES XX, 1961, 67 (q.v., 66-8, for a detailed discussion of the stylistic development of the Achaemenian symbol).

In the eastern doorway of the Tripylon again there are identical sculptures, which show the king enthroned under a canopy, the crown prince standing behind him. Both are upon a platform which is borne up on the raised arms and outspread hands of twenty-eight men, representing the twenty-eight nations of the Empire. Above the canopy floats the figure in the winged circle, exactly as it appears over the parasol in the northern doorway.[64]

Similar scenes are represented on an even more majestic scale in four doorways of the great Hundred-Columned Hall (or Throne Hall) begun by Xerxes and finished by Artaxerxes I. In the doorways on the south side, the king is again enthroned upon a platform supported by twenty-eight bearers. In those of the north side he is shown similarly enthroned above his imperial guards, giving audience to a high official.[65] Over the royal canopy in all four sculptures there once floated the figure in a winged circle, and in the southern doorways the carving is still well enough preserved in situ for it to be seen that here too the figure wears the same crown as the king; and here, moreover, it holds, not the ring of divinity but a three-lobed flower, as does the king himself.[66]

Although no representation of Darius himself with the figure in a winged circle survives on the walls of Persepolis, one is preserved on a famous cylinder seal of his, recovered from the sands of Egypt.[67] This shows Darius engaged in a lion-hunt—a traditional Assyrian theme. The king stands in a chariot, shooting with bow and arrow at a snarling lion, while another beast lies dying beneath his horses' hooves. Between the king and the lion at bay, just above head-height of the monarch and his charioteer, hovers the figure in the winged circle. He faces the same way as Darius, and wears the same crenellated crown as the king; and he is shown in the usual calm, conventional pose, right hand raised, the left holding the ring. The design is set between palm-trees, and the seal bears a trilingual cuneiform inscription (in Old Persian, Elamite and Babylonian): 'I, Dārayavahu, the king'.

[64] See Schmidt, Persepolis I, Pls 77-9; Tilia, op. cit., Pl. XXVII Fig. 25; Shahbazi, Persepolis Illustrated, Pl. XXVI. On the 'platform' (Pers. *gāthu-*) on which the king and prince are raised, see P. Calmeyer, art. cit. in n. 40, p. 361 with n. 38; Nylander, art. cit. in n. 53, 148-50.

[65] See Schmidt, op. cit., Pls 96-113; Tilia, op.cit., Pls XXII, XXIII; Shahbazi, op. cit., Pls XXVIII, XXIX; and in detail on the throne-supporters G. Walser, Völkerschaften, 51 ff.; P. Calmeyer, 'The subject of the Achaemenid tomb-reliefs', Proceedings of the 3rd Annual Symposium on Archaeological Research in Iran, Tehran, 1974, 233-6, cites an older Perso-Elamite relief showing the king upon a platform supported by bearers.

[66] See Tilia, op. cit., 40; and for reconstructions of the damaged figures, ibid., p. 34 Fig. 1; opp. p. 36, Pl. A.

[67] See Survey IV, Pl. 123A; Frankfort, Cylinder Seals, 221 with Pl. XXXVIId.

The winged disk

In addition to these representations of the figure in a winged circle, there appears in a number of carvings at Persepolis the simple winged disk without figure. This too has the tapered wing-tips of the 'Egyptian' type. One place where it regularly occurs is on the royal canopy which appears to have been erected over the Great King wherever he gave audience.[68] In the Tripylon sculpture of the king enthroned, the winged disk, without tail or appendages, is set on the canopy between borders of twelve-petalled rosettes, and is flanked by rows of snarling lions, striding towards it from left and right.[69] The canopy was similarly represented on the former facade of the eastern stairway of the Apadana, where Xerxes was shown giving audience beneath it; [70] but in the sculptures of the Hundred-Columned Hall the canopies are deeper and more elaborate.[71] There two winged disks, with tail and appendages, are shown one above the other, separated by a third band of rosettes. The lower one is flanked by striding, snarling lions, the upper one by 'angry bulls with their heads bent down and their horns pointed forwards as if they were going to attack'.[72]

The winged disk appears again in the upper panel of the Apadana stairway facade, and similarly on the stairway facade of the Tačara, also attributable to Xerxes. Here the winged disk, with tail and appendages, is once more set between bands of rosettes, but is now flanked by a pair of seated sphinxes—lion-bodied, winged creatures with human heads, royally crowned and bearded. Each sphinx raises its right paw in the customary gesture of salutation; and behind each is carved a row of nine palm-trees.[73]

That the Achaemenian use of the simple winged disk goes back at least to the time of Darius is proved by a cylinder seal from Persepolis. This shows Darius (identifiable by his crenellated crown) seated, with his son Xerxes standing facing him. Each holds a flower in his left hand, and raises the right in the gesture of salutation; and between them floats the winged disk, with tail but no appendages.[74] Like a number

[68] See Calmeyer, Iran XVIII, 1980, 57 with n. 19. For a detailed study, with plates, of these canopies and the winged symbol on them see Tilia, Studies and Restorations I, 183-90.

[69] See Tilia, loc. cit., 188 with Pl. CXII.

[70] On this as the original position of the 'Treasury Reliefs' see ibid., Ch. III, with a reconstruction of the sculpture, fig. 3 opp. p. 190. On the identification of the king see A. Shahbazi, 'The Persepolis "Treasury Reliefs" once more', AMI, N.F. IX, 1976, 151-6; R. N. Frye, 'Persepolis Again', JNES XXXIII, 1974, 383.

[71] See Tilia, op. cit., Pl. CXI.

[72] Ibid., 188.

[73] See ibid., Pl. CXIII.

[74] See Schmidt, Persepolis II, 10 with Pl. 8, seal no. 26; Calmeyer, 'Zur Genese altiranischer Motive: V Synarchie', AMI, N.F.X, 1977, 192-3.

of other representations of the symbol without figure,[75] this has a pair of horns, one of the traditional signs of divinity, set on the upper rim of the circle.

The interpretation of the winged symbol

The figure in the winged circle thus appears as superhuman, raised as it always is above the human plane, hovering protectively with the ring of divinity in its hand; and the winged disk also appears on high, and is shown repeatedly as an object of veneration. It is associated moreover on the walls of Persepolis with various powerful symbols; with the rosette, symbol of long life and immortality [76] (which indeed is to be found carved everywhere on the site, even under marble slabs placed beneath the pivot-stones of doors [77]); with snarling lions and menacing bulls, the symbols of might; and with date-palms, which represented fecundity and wealth.

The earliest suggestions for the meaning of the figure in the winged circle were that it represented either the fravaši of the king—for the fravaši is conceived as a winged spirit [78]—or Ahuramazda himself, the only divine being to be named by Darius.[79] In ancient times, however, the fravaši was thought of as female, whereas the figure in the circle is always male; [80] and the variations now established in its appearance (notably in its crown), and the fact that sometimes, in both gesture and apparel, and in the objects which it holds, it is the mirror-image of the king beneath, make it wholly improbable that it should represent the supreme God.[81]

A more convincing interpretation of the symbol is accordingly that it represents Avestan khvarenah, Median farnah, the divine grace sought after by men to bring them long life, power and prosperity.[82] The simple

[75] Cf., e.g., Schmidt, op. cit., Pl. 8, seal no. 24 with p. 10.

[76] See above, p. 57.

[77] See Herzfeld, Iran in the Ancient Near East, 233.

[78] For the bibliography of this interpretation (first advanced by de Sacy in 1793) see Shahbazi, 'An Achaemenid Symbol I', AMI, N.F. VII, 1974, 137-8.

[79] For the bibliography see ibid., 138-40 (where Shahbazi established that this interpretation too rested on very slight foundations).

[80] This point is made by Shahbazi, ibid., 138.

[81] This identification was accordingly rejected, independently, by Shahbazi, art. cit.; and P. Calmeyer, art. cit. in n. 65.

[82] For this interpretation (first put forward by I. Taraporewala, JCOI II, 1928, 16 n. 1, 25 n. 21) see Shahbazi and Calmeyer in the articles just cited; and further Calmeyer, art. cit. in n. 40; Shahbazi, art. cit. in n. 6. For the conception of khvarenah see in detail Bailey, Zor. Prob., Ch. 1 and 2, and cf. HZ I 42-3, 67. The interpretation of the ring of divinity as being understood by the Iranians to represent khvarenah (J. Duchesne-Guillemin, 'La Royauté iranienne et le khvarenah', in Iranica, (ed. Gnoli-Rossi), 375-86) appears to have little to support it.

symbol of the winged disk, it is suggested, represents khvarenah as it is accessible to all men, while the figure in the circle is the royal khvarenah, which accompanies each ruler and attaches itself to a whole dynasty through the sacred power of royal blood. That this royal khvarenah was indeed visualised as a spirit-counterpart of the king himself is illustrated by a strange Sogdian tale recorded centuries later. This relates how a 'Caesar' was tricked into believing that he was dead. As he lay in his coffin a thief 'placed the diadem of majesty on his head and put on royal garments. He approached the coffin where the Caesar was lying, and spoke thus to him: "Hey, hey, Caesar, awake, awake! Fear not, I am your Farn!".'[83]

In the Avesta khvarenah is conceived as manifesting itself in the form of a falcon (*vāreghna*): 'Khvarenah departed from king Yima ... in the shape of the falcon-bird' (Yt 19.35). This remained a living concept for the Iranians, for in the Kārnāmag ī Ardašīr, a Persian romance of the fifth century A.C., the king's 'farnah' appears in the shape of a falcon, and with its wing dashes a cup of poison from his hand.[84] Further, the word khvarenah is linked by etymology, it seems, with *hvar* 'sun';[85] and in the Avesta the sun itself is celebrated as a direct bestower of khvarenah: 'When the sun makes his light shine ... the invisible yazatas stand ready ... They gather up that khvarenah (of his), they store up that khvarenah, they distribute that khvarenah over the Ahura-created earth, to prosper the world of Aša' (Yt 6.1). The magi had thus a double reason to find in the falcon sun-disk a fitting symbol for their own concept of khvarenah. The winged disk was known as a sun-symbol in lands outside Egypt;[86] and scholars are now inclined to think that when the Assyrians set a figure within the disk, they sometimes meant it to represent a sun-like second self of the king, seen in his aspect of the 'sun-god of the whole of mankind' (one of his royal titles).[87] Moreover, the disk itself 'became a "glory", such as the seal-cutters often stud with stars'[88]—a 'glory' which in Mesopotamia was used to exalt a divine being's appearance and to terrify his enemies. The symbol thus elaborated, one may suppose, was then adopted by the Deiocids as the special symbol for the royal khvarenah, which had bestowed on them splendour and power, and had given them authority to rule in place of the Assyrians.

[83] W. B. Henning, 'Sogdian Tales', BSOAS XI, 1945, 478-9 (cited by Shahbazi, art. cit. in n. 6).

[84] KnA (ed. D. Sanjana) IX.11. (On the deliberately fostered confusion between Ādur Farnbāg and Farnah see Boyce, Zoroastrians, 123, and article on Ādur Farnbāg in Encyclopaedia Iranica, ed. E. Yarshater). In general on the falcon in Old Iranian literature and thought see B. Stricker, 'Vāreġna, the Falcon', IIJ VII, 1963-1964, 310-7.

[85] See above, 17 n. 23.

[86] See Frankfort, Cylinder Seals, 209.

[87] See M. J. Seaux, Épithètes royales akkadiennes et sumériennes, Paris 1967, 284 (cited by Calmeyer, art. cit. in n. 40, 360 n. 35, cf. 358 n. 26). Sometimes, however, even with the figure within the circle the symbol appears to represent Shamash directly, see, e.g., P. Amiet, L'art antique du Proche Orient, Paris 1977, fig. 574 (a reference I owe to the kindness of Dr. Calmeyer).

[88] Frankfort, Cylinder Seals, 212.

Median personal names, as we have seen, attest devotion to farnah in western Iran in pre-Zoroastrian times. Khvarenah/farnah belonged of old within the sphere of the Ahuras, and was under their protection; and so, even if the pagan Deiocids used the symbol, there was no doctrinal reason why the Mazda-worshipping Achaemenians should not have retained it. Its frequent appearance in their art accords admirably with the exaltation of the king which is so much that art's aim; yet it need not be doubted that when Darius was shown reverencing khvarenah he was also thought to be venerating its creator, Ahuramazda, whom he invokes so repeatedly in his inscriptions.

Other symbols of power in the Persepolis sculptures

As well as the winged disk, other more general symbols of power are carved on Persepolis walls. One is that of the 'hero triumphant', which appears in several doorway-reliefs.[89] Here a man in Persian dress, and with the long square-tipped royal beard, is engaged in combat with a lion or fabulous beast, which he holds with one hand by its mane or throat and stabs with the other. This celebration of royal strength appears also on seals found at Persepolis, sometimes with the winged disk above.[90] The seals also show the king as 'lion-dangler', holding a lion in either hand by its hind legs.[91] The killing of a lion by the king is a motif which appears repeatedly in Assyrian art; but in that art the killing of fabulous monsters is assigned to divine heroes or winged genii. Since at Persepolis the ruler is represented as overcoming these too, this, it has been suggested, was a 'conscious innovation on the part of the great king in which his super-human position and powers are symbolized'.[92]

Another ancient Near Eastern motif, widely attested, is that of 'the lion with its prey'.[93] In the Persepolis version, which 'occurs some 26

[89] See, e.g., Schmidt, Persepolis I, 136-7 with Pls 114-17.

[90] See Schmidt, Persepolis II, 7 with Pls 3-5; and in general on the winged symbol on Persepolis seals, ibid., 7 ff.

[91] See, ibid., Pl. 3 no. 3, Pl. 4 no. 6. That the 'hero' on these seals also represents the king is Schmidt's interpretation, supported by G. Walser, Völkerschaften, 26 n. 21. A. D. H. Bivar, 'A Persian monument at Athens ...', W. B. Henning Mem. Vol., 51-4, is inclined to see him rather as a divine figure, i.e. Ahuramazda.

[92] Porada, JNES XX, 1961, 68; cf. her 'Achaemenid Art', 82-4, 94 with nn. 86, 87.

[93] For references see A. D. H. Bivar, art. cit., 54-9; 'Religious subjects on Achaemenid seals', Mithraic Studies (ed. J. R. Hinnells), I 97-101; 'Document and symbol in the art of the Achaemenids', Mon. Nyberg I, Acta Iranica 4, 1975, 60-3.

times on the palace facades',[94] the victim is a noble bull, which rears on its hind legs, turning its head backwards to resist the lion, which is rending its haunches with tooth and claw. The meaning of the motif in such a setting is perplexing, since in Zoroastrianism the bull is a dominant symbol for what is beneficent and good. Among the explanations offered have been that the lion represents the sun, the bull the moon, hence the combat shows light overcoming darkness; or that the significance is astronomical, with the scene standing for Leo entering the house of Taurus at the spring New Year. 'Others, again, have conjectured that the combat symbolised is that between Ormuzd and Ahriman, or the principles of good and evil, the lion representing the pernicious and destructive power—the answer to which, of course, is that on the palaces adorned with the sculptured praises of Ormuzd, the victory of his adversary is hardly likely to have been portrayed. More probably the combat is merely a symbolical representation of the conflict, so frequently depicted in other forms on the neighbouring walls, between the king and various horrid monsters that dispute his royal power. The lion is the emblem of triumphant majesty, the bull typifies powerful but vanquished force'.[95] This accords with the fact that the bull appears as a symbol of power in a number of other places at Persepolis—on column-capitals, guarding a gate, flanking the khvarenah-symbol on the royal canopy, and together with this symbol on court seals.[96] In more than one of these positions, moreover, it alternates with the lion as a representative of might.

It seems probable, therefore, that the lion-and-bull sculptures, like those of the 'hero triumphant', were intended simply to convey a sense of majesty and formidable power, rather than having any religious connotation. The lion, being regarded as a daevic animal, never appears in Zoroastrian scriptures as a symbol of beneficent strength; and its prominence in the Persepolis carvings shows how much these depended on traditional motifs of ancient Near Eastern palace art.

Symbols of long life and immortality

As well as the ubiquitous twelve-petalled rose, neat evergreen trees appear regularly, singly or in groups, in the panels and friezes of Persepolis, and have been identified as *pinus prutia*, which grows locally.[97] Evergreen trees are still objects of veneration for the Zoroastrians of Iran, who use sprays of cypress or fir at religious ceremonies and festivals as symbols of long life and immortality.[98]

On the north wing of the inner, eastern staircase of the Apadana a procession of dignitaries is shown, most of whom hold in one hand a flower, while several carry round or oval objects, probably fruits or eggs.[99] The egg is a universal symbol of life, and as such figures regularly in Zoroastrian rituals.[100] The giving of painted eggs belongs especially to the secular observances of the spring New Year.

*Persepolis, 'Nō Rūz', and *Mithrakāna*

It is a striking fact that among all the calmly dignified figures carved on the walls of Persepolis, of kings and princes, court officials, army commanders, imperial guardsmen and tribute-bearers of many nations, there is none which can be identified as that of a priest. This may well be because leading Persian priests would have worn the Persian robe when in attendance at court, and so, after the paint had worn off the carvings, they would be indistinguishable from the Persian lay dignitaries in their once brightly coloured clothes, while leading Median priests would presumably be equally indistinguishable from Median nobles. (So in Sasanian rock-reliefs the high priest Kirder wears the same apparel as the nobles in whose company he appears.) What is certain is that there is no trace among the sculptured scenes on the terrace of any representation of a religious observance. Nevertheless, various features of its buildings and sculptures have led some scholars to regard Persepolis as a sacred city, and to interpret the terrace-complex as 'the embodiment in stone of a whole New Year ritual system with various ceremonies, processions and rites—and even astronomical observations—going on in different buildings, the functions of which are hinted at by their sculptural decoration. Persepolis would thus be a monumental prayer in stone, a petrified rite bearing witness to an Achaemenian dream of the New Day, the New Year, the New Life'.[101] This now appears an over-romantic view, encouraged perhaps by the virtual disappearance of the town on the plain below, whose mud-brick buildings have crumbled away leaving

[94] Nylander, art. cit. in n. 53, 145-6.
[95] G. N. Curzon, Persia and the Persian Question, London 1892, II 160-1; cf. C. J. Gadd, Survey I, 384-5. For a critical appraisal by Nylander of the other interpretations see art. cit., 143-4; and add Bivar, Mon. Nyberg I, 60 ff.
[96] Cf. Nylander, art. cit., 146.

[97] See Ghirshman, Persia, 158.
[98] See Boyce, Stronghold, 277, index s. 'evergreen in rituals'.
[99] See Schmidt, Persepolis I, Pls 51-2.
[100] See Boyce, op. cit., 276, s.v. 'egg'.
[101] Nylander, art. cit., 138-9 (q.v., p. 137 n. 2, for references to the main articles by A. U. Pope, R. Ghirshman and K. Erdmann in support of this interpretation).

no trace above ground—although once it was described as 'the richest city under the sun'.[102] More knowledge of ancient Near Eastern antecedents for the sculptured motifs of Persepolis has made it, moreover, unnecessary to seek religious implications in them. Yet even if the theory of a religious significance for Persepolis has to be abandoned, this theory leads us to a problem of considerable importance for Zoroastrian history, namely the observance of religious festivals in Achaemenian Iran.

The problem is a difficult one, because there is no direct contemporary evidence on this matter, and so it has to be dealt with by indirect evidence (such as that of the Zoroastrian calendar, established later in the Achaemenian period), and by deductions from the practices of subsequent epochs.[103] The probability is, as we have seen,[104] that the western Iranians in their pagan days had adopted the great Mesopotamian festival of a spring New Year, calling it in their own tongue *Navasarda, 'New Year'; and that accordingly they had re-dedicated the old Iranian autumn new year festival to Mithra, as *Mithrakana. The two feasts, celebrated at a six-months' interval, divided the year into two, and were probably kept with many similar rites. The question then is, what happened when Zoroastrianism reached western Iran, bringing its seven obligatory feasts in honour of Ahuramazda and the six Ameša Spentas? In the first volume of this history it was assumed that Zoroaster himself established the greatest of these seven feasts, that of the 'New Day' (Persian Nō Rūz), as a spring festival. One reason for this assumption was that the secondary Zoroastrian literature endows this festival with the symbolism of spring, seeing in the resurgence of life then a foreshadowing of the future New Day, with resurrection of the body and life everlasting.[105] Nō Rūz, thus celebrated, has much in common with the Christian Easter as this is observed in Europe, and hence over much of the world. However, Easter as the first Christians knew it was, like the Jewish Passover, a harvest festival, and its springtime symbolism developed as the faith travelled northwards; and it may be that a similar change took place with the Zoroastrian 'New Day' feast in western Iran.

There are two main reasons for suspecting such a development. One is the evidence that the Old Iranian new year began in the autumn.[106] The other is that under the Parthians Nō Rūz was, it seems, celebrated

[102] Diodorus XVII.70. On the many traces of Achaemenian buildings on the north-eastern part of the Marv Dasht see Tilia, Studies and Restorations II, 73-91.
[103] On the dangers attending this latter process see Nylander, art. cit.
[104] See above, p. 34.
[105] See HZ I 175, 224, 245-6.
[106] See HZ I 174.

at the autumn equinox.[107] This autumn Nō Rūz was inherited by the Sasanians, and it was not until late in their epoch that a calendar-reform established the festival as a spring observance.[108] There seems, however, no reason why the Sasanians should have carried out this difficult reform if the Persians had never previously known a spring Nō Rūz; and so the probability seems that in enacting this measure they were re-establishing a former Persian usage against a Parthian one, imposed by the Arsacids. It is known that the Sasanians sought in a variety of ways to reassert western against eastern Iranian traditions; and although much had been forgotten about the Achaemenian period, priestly memories about religious festivals are likely to have been long.

If this hypothesis is sound, we must assume that the Old Iranian festival of Hamaspathmaēdaya, which precedes Nō Rūz as night the day, was originally a late autumn feast, falling between the festivals of Ayāthrima and Maidhyāirya;[109] and this is the more probable because All Souls Day is widely celebrated at that season among Indo-European peoples. It must further be supposed that the detailed association of the seven feasts with the seven creations as it is now known (whereby it is the spring festival of Maidhyōizaremāya which is connected with the first creation, the sky, and so on through the year)[110] does not belong to primitive Zoroastrianism, but was an adaptation by western Iranian priestly scholars, who also presumably evolved the symbolism of Rapithwina returning at Nō Rūz.[111] The hypothesis demands in fact a re-assessment of the elements of the original Zoroastrian holy year in their relation to one another, although not of their fundamental significance 'as a means of expounding essential doctrine through communal observance'.[112]

We have then to suppose that when the Achaemenians adopted Zoroastrianism, they were unwilling to give up the observance of *Navasarda, 'New Year', linked by then for generations with annual displays of royal power and wealth; and so with the help of their magi they identified it with the holiest of the Zoroastrian festivals, 'New Day', thus turning the Zoroastrian autumn feast into a spring one. There was no

[107] See G. Le Rider, Suse sous les Séleucides et les Parthes, Paris 1965, 33 ff.; Boyce, 'Mihragān among the Irani Zoroastrians', Mithraic Studies I (ed. J. R. Hinnells), 107-8; S. Insler, 'A new interpretation of the bull-slaying motif', Hommages à M. J. Vermaseren, II, Leiden 1978, 532-4.
[108] See (with references especially to the works of S. H. Taqizadeh and E. J. Bickerman) Boyce, 'On the calendar of Zoroastrian feasts', BSOAS XXXIII, 1970, 513-39.
[109] For the list of festival-names see HZ I 174.
[110] See with references Boyce, art. cit., 524.
[111] See HZ I 250-9.
[112] See HZ I 259-60.

Zoroastrian holy day to be equated with *Mithrakāna (since the other six days of obligation form a uniform chain); and so, beloved though this festival remained in western Iran, it was never recognized as an obligatory Zoroastrian feast.

If the above reconstruction is sound, it seems possible that in different years and different reigns both *Navasarda/Nō Rūz and *Mithrakāna may have been celebrated at Persepolis—but the latter perhaps more often. Athenaeus states that the Achaemenians used to spend the autumn at Persepolis;[113] and this is a delightful season on the Iranian plateau, whereas late March may still be cold, with bitter winds. Moreover, as has been pointed out, for northern tribute-bearers to arrive at Persepolis by March they would have had to leave their own lands while snow still lay on roads and passes; and this is perhaps the reason why the satrap of Armenia delivered to the Persian king 20,000 foals every year at *Mithrakāna rather than at *Navasarda[114]—although another reason, it has been suggested, may have been that since the horse was a creature associated with the sun, this gift was more appropriate to Mithra's feast.[115] At whichever festival tribute was paid (if indeed the payment of tribute, as distinct from the giving of obligatory 'gifts', took place at any festival[116]), the treasury at Persepolis remained well filled, and when Alexander finally seized it he found that it contained immense wealth.[117]

The tomb of Darius

On the northern edge of the Marv Dasht, some 6 km. (4 miles) from Persepolis, a mountain range presents to the plain a sheer cliff-face.[118] On this cliff-face, later called Naqš-i Rustam, there have been found the remains of an Elamite carving, which showed, it seems, gods and worshippers;[119] so presumably the place was a sacred one from pre-Iranian times.

It was here, high up in the cliff-face, that Darius chose to have his

[113] Deipnosophists XI.513. For this reference, and some of the secondary literature concerning Mihragān at Persepolis, see Nylander, art. cit. in n. 53, 143 n. 28.

[114] See Strabo XI.14.9.

[115] Cf. Herodotus III.90, where Darius is said to have required from Cilicia 360 white horses annually, one for each day of the year—possibly, that is, for a daily sacrifice to Mithra as lord of the sun. Cf. Clemen, Nachrichten, 76-7.

[116] P. Calmeyer, 'Textual sources for the interpretation of Achaemenian palace decorations', Iran XVIII, 1980, 55-63, argues, perhaps a little too strongly, for the Persepolis 'gift-bearer reliefs' being simply general representations of the making of gifts to the king by his subjects at any time or place.

[117] Diodorus XVII, 70.

[118] For a map and superb air-photograph see Schmidt, Persepolis III, figs. 1, 2.

[119] See Herzfeld, Archaeological History of Iran, 5; Schmidt, op. cit., 121.

tomb prepared.[120] A narrow platform was cut into the rock, and from it a door was made into a long narrow entrance-chamber, running in its length parallel to the cliff-face. From this three vaults, rectangular in shape, extended back into the rock, their floors being over a metre higher than that of the entrance-chamber; and hewn out of these floors were nine burial-cists, three to each vault. Channels were cut in the floors to lead any moisture away down into the entrance-chamber; and each cist was securely covered with a lid made from a solid block of stone, shaped into a low gable. The ceilings of the vaults were also partly or entirely cut into gable-form. Which of the nine cists was that of Darius himself is unknown, for they are hardly differentiated. It appears that the dead were laid in the stone cists in coffins of another material—probably gold, or plated with gold. There is no record of how the tombs were furnished, but the long entrance-chamber had room for many grave-goods, if this was desired. Originally the outer doorway leading into it was probably closed by heavy doors of stone, of which no trace remains.

The tomb is thus wholly different in design from that of Cyrus; and the inspiration for it, it has been suggested, came from rock-cut grottoes—presumed to be tombs—in the territory of ancient Urartu.[121] A number of these have been examined, and they share essential features with Darius' tomb: they are set in steep rock-faces, and have a narrow platform with a small door leading into a chamber longer than it is wide; and from this (or from a second such chamber) inner vaults lead deeper into the rock. In these there are raised platforms, upon which it is assumed the dead were laid.[122]

An inscription of Xerxes, cut in a niche on the rock-wall of the castle of Van, in Urartian teritory, contains these lines: 'Dārayavahu the King, my father, by the will of Ahuramazda built much that was good. And this place he gave orders to carve out, but he did not achieve the writing of the inscription. Afterwards I gave orders to engrave this inscription'.[123] These words attest Darius' presence in Van, and his interest in the area; and wherever the Great King went his court accompanied him, including his priests. It thus seems indeed likely that the Persians came to know of the rock-cut vaults, as a local curiosity; and that the magi, pondering the problem of royal burial and the purity laws, suggested to Darius

[120] For a full description, with figures and plates, see Schmidt, op. cit., 87-9.

[121] See P. Calmeyer, 'Zur Genese altiranischer Motive: III Felsgräber', AMI, N.F. VIII, 1975, 99-113.

[122] For a list of sites, with bibliography, see ibid., 102.

[123] XV 17-25 (Kent, 153). On the wording see Gershevitch, TPS 1979, 154 n. 69.

that a tomb such as these, hewn out of rock, would preserve an embalmed body even more safely than a stone-built sepulchre from all danger of contaminating the good creations. (That the king himself had a true Zoroastrian sense of the impurity of a dead body is shown by a story told by Herodotus, of how he would not use a busy city-gate in Babylon because the tomb of a Babylonian queen had been built above it.[124])

The remains of an unfinished Achaemenian monument not far from Naqš-i Rustam, the so-called Takht-i Rustam or Takht-i Gohar, are generally regarded as the base for a free-standing tomb like that of Cyrus at Pasargadae.[125] 'The massive stone blocks bear mason's marks that are close to those found at Pasargadae and ... certain later traits in the masonry ... are well documented at Persepolis'.[126] The projected tomb has accordingly been interpreted as either that of Cambyses,[127] or possibly one intended by Darius for himself, but abandoned when the plan for a rock-cut sepulchre was adopted.[128]

In Darius' mountain-tomb there is a characteristic Zoroastrian triplicity, with the three vaults and nine cists. Who his companions were there remains unknown, but it is reasonable to suppose that among them were Queen Atossa and her half-sister Artystone, daughters of Cyrus.[129]

The religious elements in the carvings above the tomb

The mountain-face outside Darius' tomb was impressively carved.[130] A huge recessed area over 21 m. (70 ft.) in height was hewn out of the rock in the shape of a Greek cross. The horizontal middle section was carved to represent the front of a palace, with the doorway into the tomb forming its entry-gate. Below this the bottom section was left smooth and blank for protection, while the third upper section was filled with reliefs. The graves of six other kings of Darius' line are known, and all are rock-cut sepulchres like his, with the same sculptured facade; so where the carvings of his own tomb are badly weathered, details can be supplied from one or other of these.

In the reliefs in the upper section Darius is shown standing on a three-stepped plinth, which itself rests upon a great platform borne up by

[124] I.187.
[125] See (with bibliography) Stronach, Pasargadae, 302-4 with Pls 186, 187; Tilia, Studies and Restorations II, 73 with Pl. XLI.
[126] Stronach, op. cit., 303.
[127] Herzfeld, op. cit., 36.
[128] Stronach, op. cit., 304, entertained this latter possibility, but dismissed it on the grounds that in some respects the materials and workmanship were unworthy of Darius.
[129] For a full discussion see Schmidt, op.cit., 89-90.
[130] See ibid., 80-7, with plates.

representatives of the nations of his empire—a motif we have seen repeated on the palace-walls of Persepolis. There is no fallen foe here to be trodden underfoot, but otherwise the king is shown very much as at Behistun—in left profile, left foot advanced, and left hand holding a bow, while his right is raised in the familiar gesture of salutation. No one attends him on the royal platform; but the whole scene is set within a frame, and in the borders of this frame stand, to left and right, the six noble Persians who were the chief supporters of his throne, a grouping apparently meant, as we have seen, to mirror that of the six Ameša Spentas around Ahuramazda.[131]

The Zoroastrian implications of the tomb-sculpture are made explicit by the fact that the king stands before a fire-holder of the Pasargadae type—consisting, that is, of a three-stepped top and base, joined by a rectangular shaft. The shaft is here ornamented by a central panel framed by two bands, so that it too appears to have three divisions. The fire is shown as a pyramidal mass of flames leaping up from the top. This is the earliest known representation of the fire-holder with burning fire, which was to be the most generally used Zoroastrian symbol down the ages. To pray before an elevated fire may be assumed to have been a rite peculiar to a Zoroastrian king; and so by this carving Darius was making a strong visual affirmation of his faith. It is probable that the sculptured fire was meant to represent his own 'hearth' or personal fire, set in its elevated holder when he became king, according to the custom established, it seems, by Cyrus; for a ruler's hearth fire had of old a special significance for his tribe or people.[132]

The fire-holder rests on the same great platform upon which the king stands; and above and between them hovers the figure in the winged circle, again very much as in the Behistun sculpture. The wings have the same blunt ends as there, not the tapered ones of the Persepolis carvings; and again the figure faces the king, returning his gesture of salutation with one hand, and holding with the other the ring of divinity. The striking difference is that the tall archaic crown has gone, and instead the figure wears a low crown like the king's, although the stone is too worn for it to be seen whether it too was crenellated. In every other respect the figure mirrors Darius, as would be fitting for the representation of his own khvarenah.[133]

[131] See above, pp. 92-3.
[132] See A. B. Keith, The religion and philosophy of the Veda and Upanishads, 625-6.
[133] See the articles by Calmeyer and Shahbazi, cited in nn. 40, 65 and 78. Both scholars suggested that the imposing figure in the Behistun relief might represent the khvarenah of Achaemenes, validating Darius' seizure of the throne. In the Persepolis carvings it is only the protective 'man-

Behind the figure in the winged circle, and on the same level as it, there is carved a raised disk with a crescent along its lower rim. In form this is identical with the ancient Mesopotamian symbol of the moon-god Sin, held to represent the new moon as it can be seen at dusk, with the rest of the moon's surface faintly visible in the sun's refracted light.[134]

The symbol was used in the worship of Sin in Babylonia under Achaemenian rule, so that it might have entered Persian iconography directly from there, or again derive from Assyria through Median intermediaries; but in either case its precise significance for the Iranians needs to be established. The crescent moon appears on seals together with the figure in a winged circle;[135] and this strengthens the assumption that the two symbols could be regarded as complementary, with the 'khvarenah' one retaining something of its primary significance of a solar symbol. This is not surprising, for that significance was clearly still understood in Babylonia, and would have been emphasized anew for the Persians through their contacts with Egypt. There is no reason to doubt that western Iranian theologians were ready to see more than one level of meaning in the visual symbols which they chose to adopt.

It is striking that in the tomb-sculpture the figure in a winged circle, the moon-disk, and the fire below them, make a balanced group of three objects before which the king stands in reverence. Three of the major Zoroastrian prayers, the Khoršēd, Māh and Ādur Niyāyeš, are devoted to sun, moon and fire; and in a Pahlavi text, in answer to the question how prayer and praise of the yazatas is to be performed, it is enjoined that prayers should be said facing the sun, moon or fire; and that, moreover, if a sin is committed, it should be repented of and renounced before the sun, moon or fire.[136] At one level of meaning, therefore, the tomb-relief simply shows the king at prayer according to orthodox Zoroastrian prescriptions.

On Achaemenian seals the moon-symbol also appears, however, with a figure upon or within it. This modification again derives from

bulls' and winged sphinxes which keep the traditional horned crown of superhuman beings. Porada, 'Achaemenid Art', 82, sees a slight difference in other representations between the crown of Darius and that of the accompanying figure in the winged circle, and so also in the case of Xerxes. She is prepared nevertheless to accept the case for regarding the figure as the symbol of the royal khvarenah except at Behistun, and perhaps on some early cylinder seals, where she still maintains that it represents Ahuramazda; but such dual significance hardly seems probable.

[134] See Schmidt, Persepolis III, 85; R. M. Boehmer, 'Die neuassyrischen Felsreliefs von Maltai (Nord-Irak)', JdI 90, 1975, 50.

[135] P. R. S. Moorey, 'The iconography of an Achaemenid stamp seal ...', Iran XVI, 1978, 148-9, cites the design on a seal from Pasargadae (see Stronach, Pasargadae, 178-9 with Pl. 162a), and on that of Arsames, satrap of Egypt, both of the fifth century.

[136] MKh. LIII.

Mesopotamia, where from the eighth century B.C. the moon-symbol appears in Babylonian and Assyrian art supporting or framing the upper part of a male figure, who wears the horned crown of a god, and is presumably Sin himself. The symbol thus elaborated is to be found together with that of the figure in the winged circle, who probably then represents Shamash.[137] On Achaemenian seals the figure cradled in the moon-crescent, or framed by the moon-disk, appears sometimes alone,[138] sometimes set beneath the figure in the winged circle.[139] Moreover, the figure of the moon-symbol is exactly like that of the sun-symbol: it is the upper part of a bearded male figure, robed and crowned like a king; it raises one hand in salutation, and in the other holds an object which, when it can be made out, proves to be the ring of divinity or a three-lobed flower.[140] Both symbols are regularly flanked by a pair of worshippers, either venerating or supporting them; and there are even rare instances where the moon-figure has four wings and the falcon-tail, thus resembling those varieties of the sun-symbol which have a second, upcurled pair of wings above the first pair.[141] On the earrings considered at the beginning of this chapter the central figure is set upon the moon-disk with crescent, and the disk itself is furnished with two pairs of upcurled wings and the falcon-tail. The six smaller figures around it are each cradled in the crescent within the moon-disk, which encircles them.[142]

The exact resemblance of the crowned figures of the sun- and moon-symbols shows that both must be linked with the king; and it seems significant that the moon, like the sun, has striking connections with khvarenah. In the Māh Yašt it is said of the moon: 'The Ameša Spentas stand, holding (its) khvarenah, the Ameša Spentas stand, distributing (its) khvarenah upon the Ahura-created earth' (Yt 7.3); and in a Pahlavi text the moon is itself given the epithet of 'distributor of khvarenah', and its allotted duty is said to be 'distributing khvarenah to the world'.[143] The underlying thought was perhaps that the radiant sun and moon divided between them the task of sending down the divine glory to earth by day and night; and the use of the elaborated sun- and moon-symbols together in Achaemenian art was perhaps to suggest that the

[137] See Calmeyer, art. cit. in n. 65, 236; Moorey, art. cit., 147.

[138] E.g. Survey IV, Pl. 123 J.

[139] E.g. ibid., Pl. 123 K; Schmidt, Persepolis II, Pl. 6 nos. 16, 17, 18.

[140] See Schmidt, op. cit., 8.

[141] E.g. Survey IV, Pl. 123 B.

[142] For illustrations see above, n. 23.

[143] GBd. XXVI.21, 25.

king's glory too shone throughout the twenty four hours. Further, it is conceivable that the moon-symbol was used alone in honour of a dead king, whose 'glory' would have been accessible to his descendants, through prayer and veneration, by the action of his fravaši, necessarily most powerful in the night.[144] Darius' tomb-sculpture would naturally have been carved while the king was still alive, and so (according to this theory) sun- and moon-symbols properly appear there together even when interpreted on this level; but the fifth-century earrings were perhaps made to honour a dead king together with his chief nobles, and so showed them with the moon-symbol alone—although with the central figure this is given the wings and tail of the sun-disk, perhaps to imply the greatness still of the king's power.

Whether or not this interpretation of the use of the symbols is correct, it seems that in the iconography of Darius' reign the prohibition was maintained against making a representation of any divine being—for though the concept of Khvarenah is hypostatized as a yazata, the royal khvarenah cannot itself be regarded as a divinity, but rather as a divine glory or grace. The inscriptions at the tomb of Darius—one text carved in its various versions behind the king in the upper panel, the other on either side of the entrance to the tomb [145]—contain orthodox words of worship for Ahuramazda, and for him alone; but it is evident now that there is no visual representation there of the supreme Being.

The Kaʿba-yi Zardušt

At the foot of the cliff-face of Naqš-i Rustam, a little further along than Darius' own tomb, stands the impressive tower now known as the Kaʿba-yi Zardušt. This is a close copy of the Zendan-i Sulaiman at Pasargadae—so close that there can be no doubt that it was erected in imitation of it and for the same purpose. Alone of later Achaemenian structures, the Kaʿba reflects the Pasargadae predeliction for contrasting light and dark stone. Yet its fabric shows many marks of the toothed chisel, and this combined evidence has led to its firm attribution to the reign of Darius.[146]

In solidity of structure the Kaʿba is superior to the palaces of Persepolis, although in some details it is less perfectly executed than the Zendan.[147] Outwardly it is almost exactly like the latter building, with the same strong emphasis on triplicity: the tower again stands on a three-stepped stone plinth, and has the three rows of false windows which make it look like a three-storeyed building. There are small differences in detail, however. The outer staircase is thought to have had thirty steps, not twenty-nine, and to have led up to a small landing outside the chamber-door. (This door opens to the north rather than north-west, presumably because the tower is built to face the cliff.) Further, instead of a double roof, there is a single one made of four huge stone slabs (in places a metre thick). The two outer ones rest entirely on the massive walls, the two inner ones also provide the ceiling of the tomb-chamber. They are flat beneath, but are shaped on top into a low pyramid which shows above the parapet. In outward appearance the roof was thus like that of the Zendan; and the enormous thickness of the slabs would have given complete ritual protection against impurity ascending from the room below.

The Kaʿba clearly had great care spent on it, and was costly in materials and labour, so that it must have been intended for an illustrious purpose. It is possible, therefore, that it was begun at the behest of Queen Atossa, that she might have as noble a tomb as her mother, Cassandane; and that when subsequently Darius had his own tomb made large enough to hold the coffins of the most exalted members of his family, the Kaʿba was used as a mausoleum for lesser queens and princes.[148] (One lady whose body, it would seem, might have lain in either place was his niece, Phratagune, the only child of his compaternal brother Artanes, with whom Darius contracted a khvaētvadatha-marriage; she bore him two valiant sons who were to die at Thermopylae.[149])

The tomb of Parnaka (?)

There survives on a stone slab from Dascylion, the capital of the Achaemenian satrapy of Hellespontine Phrygia, a carving which has been interpreted as representing a ritual act outside a tomb.[150] This

[144] On the cult of the dead king see Calmeyer, art. cit. in n. 65. On the fravašis and the night see HZ I 124, 259.

[145] For the OP texts of these inscriptions (known as Darius Naqš-i Rustam a and b), see Kent, Old Persian, 137-40. The Elamite version of DNb was published by R. Borger apud Hinz, Funde und Forschungen, 53 ff.

[146] On the Kaʿba see Schmidt, Persepolis III, 34-8 with figures and plates; and for its date, ibid., 49; Stronach, Pasargadae, 132.

[147] See Stronach, op. cit., 130.

[148] The fact that, more than 500 years after the downfall of the dynasty, a Sasanian inscription was cut on the Kaʿba walls which possibly refers to a different use for the building then does not affect this supposition. The tower was almost certainly ransacked soon after Alexander's conquest; and an empty tomb would in time become ritually clean again, even according to the strictest Zoroastrian purity laws.

[149] See Herodotus VII.224.

[150] See Th. Macridy, 'Reliefs gréco-perses de la région de Dascylion', Bulletin de Correspondence Hellènique XXXVII, 1913, 348-52 with Pl. VIII; Survey IV, Pl. 103B; Herzfeld, Am Tor von Asien, Pl. XIVb. For the above interpretation of the sculpture see A. Büsing-Kolbe, JdI 92, 1977, 120, and D. Stronach, 'The relief of the Magi from Dascylion', Festschrift K. Bittel, in press.

shows two magi, dressed in tunic and trousers, with kandys and tiara. They stand side by side, and both have the side-flaps of the tiara tied so as to cover nose and mouth. Each holds in his left hand a thick scroll-like object, about a foot and a half long, which is presumably the long baresman with the separate twigs unmarked. Each raises his right hand, but in a curiously unIranian gesture, with fingers and thumb spread out. Beside them are the heads of an ox and a ram, resting on what appears to be a low platform of wattles; and behind is part of a doorway whose moulding has been compared to that of the doorways of the Zendan and Kaʿba. The whole sculpture is set within a raised frame, like certain carvings at Pasargadae usually attributed to the time of Darius; and this feature, and an abundance of toothed-chisel markings, provides further evidence for attributing the relief to the late sixth or early fifth century.[151] Its style, like that of other sculptures from the region, is characterized as Graeco-Persian; and it has been suggested that the sculptor may have been a Persian trained in a Greek school.[152] The rite which is represented appears to be the consecration to the yazata Haoma of the heads of sacrificed animals, a rite solemnized by the Parsis down to the nineteenth, and by the Irani Zarduštis into the twentieth century.[153] This rite is a part of regular observances for the souls of the dead; and it seems likely that the carving shows its pious enactment outside the tomb of some great man. Whose tomb it was remains necessarily a matter for conjecture; but there seems a strong possibility that it was that of Parnaka (Greek Pharnaces), son of Aršāma and uncle of Darius, who appointed him, it appears, satrap of Hellespontine Phrygia, a dignity which remained hereditary in his family for generations.[154]

The religious element in Darius' inscriptions

The walls of the Kaʿba were left free of inscriptions, like those of the Zendan; but Darius not only had long inscriptions carved outside his own tomb, but set many others on palace walls, and on steles, statues and tablets. These were almost all in the Old Persian language, with its special cuneiform script, and the longer ones were usually accompanied by Elamite and Akkadian versions. The texts were presumably prepared to the king's commands by his chief scribes; but it is reasonable to suppose that Darius' chief priests were among those consulted before they were finally approved, at least in the case of those inscriptions which contain substantial religious elements.

[151] See Stronach, art. cit.
[152] See S. Casson, 'Achaemenid Sculpture', Survey I, 350-1.
[153] See Boyce, 'Haoma, priest of the sacrifice', W. B. Henning Mem. Vol., 77-9.
[154] See R. T. Hallock, The Evidence of the Persepolis Tablets, 11-4; D. M. Lewis, Sparta and Persia, 7-13, 52.

All but the briefest engraved texts contain some religious matter, since Darius regularly attributes his greatness and achievements to the will of Ahuramazda,[155] whom he speaks of, probably by a traditional Persian phrase, as 'the greatest of the gods' (*hya mathišta bagānām*).[156] He invokes him together 'with all the gods' (*hadā visaibiš bagaibiš*),[157] yet he never honours any of these lesser beings by mentioning them by name; and this is the more remarkable in that Zoroaster himself names more than a dozen yazatas in the Gathas,[158] and theologically there were no grounds why any of his followers should not have done the like. Several possible reasons suggest themselves for Darius' reticence. First, there was that ruler's pride and sense of dignity, so that as King of kings he addressed only the God of gods. Then there was the religious situation at the time. Darius succeeded to Zoroastrian rulers, and probably himself belonged to the third generation of believers in his own family; but there must still have been Medes and Persians who were adherents of the old religion. According to its tenets, Ahuramazda was a very great god, but was not acknowledged as God himself, the Creator of all other beneficent divinities. By naming him exclusively, Darius therefore publicly affirmed his own adherence to the faith preached by Zoroaster—that is, to Mazda-worship.

Further, by the time Zoroaster's teachings reached the western Iranians their pantheon included two prominent divinities, Anāhiti and Tīri, who were not only unknown to the Avesta, but who were in concept largely alien to Iranian tradition; and considerable difficulties were evidently felt about admitting these two beings into the ranks of the major Zoroastrian yazatas. There can be little doubt that their worship continued uninterrupted among the Medes and Persians, and in the end Zoroastrian theologians had to find means of assimilating their cults[159]; but until this was done the Achaemenian kings may have avoided confronting the problem by deliberately not naming any lesser divinities in their public proclamations.

[155] See above, p. 79 n. 5.
[156] DPd 1-2; DPh 9; DSf 9; DSp 1; DH 7. Cf. above, pp. 27-8.
[157] DPd 14, 22, 24. (On the reading *visaibiš* see M. Mayrhofer, 'Die Rekonstruktion des Medischen', Anzeiger d. Österr. Ak. d. Wiss. 1968, 16-8.) On the unique phrase 'the other gods who are' see above, p. 83 with n. 16.
[158] See HZ I 195.
[159] See below, p. 201 ff., and on Cyrus and Anāhiti cf. above, p. 49 n. 4.

Orthodox Zoroastrian theology found further positive expression in Darius' inscriptions in lines which celebrate Ahuramazda as Creator of the physical world: 'A great god is Ahuramazda, who created this earth, who created yonder sky, who created man, who created happiness for man'.[160] A likeness has been traced between these lines and verses of Second Isaiah, which similarly exalt Yahweh as Creator;[161] but Darius' particular praise of Ahuramazda as the Creator of 'happiness for man' is significant. According to Zoroaster's teachings the supreme Lord is the Creator only of what is good, whereas to the Jewish prophet Yahweh is the 'author alike of prosperity and trouble'.[162]

The corruptions of the Hostile Spirit in the world are acknowledged by Darius through frequent references to *drauga*. This word has a range of meanings opposed to those of *arta*, i.e. falsehood, disorder, wickedness. The similar antithesis between Avestan *drug* and *aša*, and (more faintly) Sanskrit *druh* and *ṛta* shows that the concepts go back to Indo-Iranian times;[163] and sometimes indeed Darius uses the term *drauga* in a wholly traditional way. Thus in one inscription he prays on behalf of Persia that Ahuramazda 'may protect this country from a hostile army, from famine, from *drauga*';[164] and in doing so, it is suggested,[165] he was seeking protection from three stereotyped evils which might assail society. In other passages Drauga appears rather as a personification, in the spirit of Zoroaster's own teachings.[166] Thus Darius declares: 'All the countries which were rebellious, it was Drauga which made them rebellious';[167] and he urges his successor: 'You who shall be king hereafter, protect yourself vigorously from Drauga'.[168] The wicked, treacherous or rebellious man is defined as *draujana*, and Darius admonishes future kings to punish him.[169] He also declares that Ahuramazda has borne him aid because he himself is not *draujana*.[170] It seems a little strange that the concept of virtue should be thus negatively expressed,

[160] DNb 1-3, cf. DNa 1-3, DSs 1-4.
[161] See E. J. Bickerman apud Morton Smith, JAOS 80, 1963, 420 (citing parallel words from one of Xerxes' inscriptions).
[162] Is. 45.7, see further below, p. 195. On Darius' stress on 'happiness' see Benveniste, Titres et noms propres, 119-21, with a different deduction.
[163] See HZ I 87.
[164] DPd. 19-20.
[165] See Benveniste, Le vocabulaire des institutions indo-européennes, I, 288-9; and on *haēna* further J. Kellens, 'Trois réflexions sur la religion des Achéménides', Studien zur Indologie und Iranistik 2, 1976, 115-7.
[166] See HZ I 200.
[167] DB IV.33-4. On the parallel here with Assyrian royal thought see above, p. 83.
[168] DB IV.37-8.
[169] DB IV.67-9.
[170] DB IV.63.

and that the word *artavan* (the equivalent of Av. *ašavan*) should not occur in Darius' inscriptions, any more than the substantive *arta* (although both are recorded in those of his son Xerxes). Conceivably this came about because the Behistun inscription (the earliest as well as the longest) is so much taken up with accounts of the doings of the 'wicked', i.e. the rebellious, that it seemed natural in it to define virtue as not being like them; and so a pattern was set.

The positive concept of *arta*, in the sense of good social order, even if not expressed, was clearly constantly present in Darius' thoughts; and he was firm in his conviction that the divine will was that he himself should maintain *arta* by ruling over mankind. So he declares: 'When Ahuramazda saw this earth turbulent, then he bestowed it on me. He made me king . . . By the will of Ahuramazda I set it again in its place'.[171] 'Much that was ill done, that I made good. Countries were turbulent, one man smiting another. The following I brought about by the will of Ahuramazda, that no one ever smites another, each one is in his place. My law—of that they are afraid, so that the stronger does not smite nor destroy the weaker'.[172] Since he saw himself as ruling by the will of Ahuramazda, his law was plainly identical with the law ordained by God, and so he could say: 'O man, that which is the command of Ahuramazda, let this not seem repugnant to thee. Do not leave the right path. Do not rise in rebellion!'[173] Should any man be so wicked, then Darius prided himself on visiting him with just retribution: 'It is not my desire that a man should do harm; nor indeed is that my desire, if he should do harm, he should not be punished'.[174] Ahuramazda had endowed him with 'wisdom and energy',[175] and he was able to bridle his wrath through self-discipline,[176] as a true Zoroastrian should, and so administer an even-handed justice: 'I am a friend to right, I am not a friend to wrong. It is not my desire that the weak man should have wrong done to him by the mighty, nor is that my desire, that the mighty man should have wrong done to him by the weak. What is right, that is my desire'.[177]

By such aims and actions Darius was serving not only Aša Vahišta, the great Ameša Spenta who hypostatizes justice and right, but also Khšathra Vairya, who is honoured through all properly exercised author-

[171] DNa 31-6.
[172] DSe 31-41.
[173] DNa 56-60.
[174] DNb 16-21.
[175] DNb 3-4.
[176] DNb 13-5.
[177] DNb 7-12.

ity. The king tells us further that he disciplined and trained his own body, inviting thus the Ameša Spentas of health and long life, Haurvatāt and Ameretāt, into his being. Thus he declares: 'I am trained, hand and foot. As a rider I am a good rider. As an archer I am a good archer, both on foot and mounted. As a spearman I am a good spearman, both on foot and mounted. And the manly skills which Ahuramazda has bestowed on me, and which I have had the strength to use—what I have done through the will of Ahuramazda, I have done with these skills which Ahuramazda has bestowed on me'.[178] Down the centuries Darius' successors likewise are shown by alien writers—Herodotus, Xenophon, Plutarch—to have maintained the Zoroastrian ideal of physical health and hardihood, despite the luxuries of palace life.

Devotion and good purpose, hypostatized by the other two Ameša Spentas, Spenta Ārmaiti and Vohu Manah, find ample expression in Darius' words, as for example in the following: 'After Ahuramazda made me king in this earth, by the will of Ahuramazda all (that) I did was good'; [179] 'Ahuramazda is mine, I am Ahuramazda's. I worshipped Ahuramazda, may Ahuramazda bear me aid'.[180] Whatever political element there may be in some of Darius' religious utterances (with the exaltation of Ahuramazda reflecting on the greatness of his worshipper), there is no reason to doubt the sincerity and force of the king's personal beliefs, or the soundness of his Zoroastrian theology, which he chose also to declare visually through the iconography of his tomb.

Yet although Zoroaster's teachings shape the theology of Darius' utterances, no mark of Avestan influence is to be found in their vocabulary. Persian, not Avestan, religious terms are used, with the word *baga* 'god' appearing instead of the characteristic Zoroastrian *yazata*, and invocation of 'all the gods' being made instead of only the 'bounteous' (*spenta*) divinities.[181] Clearly in this Darius and his priests were maintaining familiar usages. Zoroastrian missionaries to Persia must have presented their prophet's teachings there in the Persian language and idiom (as Cyrus' agent in Babylon presented them, presumably, in Aramaic to Second Isaiah); and they do not seem to have felt impelled to challenge the traditional religious vocabulary. The use of *baga* as the general term for 'god' persisted for many generations in Persia (as in other parts of Iran); and still in the third century A.C. the Persian

[178] DNb 40-9.
[179] DSi 2-4.
[180] DSk 4-5.
[181] On *spenta* as a defining and excluding term see HZ I 196-7.

high priest Kirdēr was able to refer to heaven by an archaic phrase as *bayān gāh* 'place of the gods'.[182] The collection of Avestan hymns to the yazatas received the Middle Persian title of *Bayān Yašt*, 'Worship of the gods', and there are numerous other instances of pre-Zoroastrian usages continuing. Such differences between liturgical and ordinary vocabulary seem the more natural since the language of the holy texts, Avestan, differed markedly from the western Iranian vernaculars, and would not have been literally understood by most worshippers.

It has also often been remarked that the name of Ahuramazda's great Adversary, Anra Mainyu, is missing from Darius' inscriptions, and that it is Drauga alone who there represents the world of evil; but in the Gathas themselves the Drug is mentioned more often than Anra Mainyu, and the Hostile Spirit's name does not occur at all in the Fravarānē, where it is the Daevas who are collectively abjured as 'the most Drug-like of beings'.[183] There is nothing anomalous, therefore, in the usage of Darius' priests in this respect.

Another omission which has been a perplexity to scholars is that of Zoroaster's own name; but again this is matched by a similar reticence on the part of the Sasanian Kirdēr, who never uttered the prophet's name in any of his inscriptions, even though these, unlike the inscriptions of Darius, were explicitly concerned with religious matters. At that same period the Pahlavi books were full of references to Zoroaster. It would seem, therefore, that the silence of the inscriptions was peculiar to them—just conceivably, in the Achaemenian era, because the scribal traditions of Assyria and Urartu, Babylon and Elam, provided no conventional pattern for referring to a prophet in royal proclamations. It is not likely that Darius' priests would have pressed for the difficulty to be overcome, because for them the alien art of writing had little properly to do with holy matters.

Even with these omissions there is a strong religious content in Darius' major inscriptions, which through the public and general proclamation of some of the texts must have become known throughout the empire; for proof has been found that it was not only the Behistun text which was disseminated in translation, since lines have been identified from one of Darius' tomb-inscriptions surviving in an Aramaic version on papyrus.[184] This religious element in his words is consistently Zoro-

[182] E.g. Kirdēr, Kaʿba-yi Zardušt, 3-4 (M. Back, Die sasanidischen Staatsinschriften, Acta Iranica 18, 1978, 393).
[183] See HZ I 253-4, 255.
[184] See N. Sims-Williams, 'The final paragraph of the tomb-inscription of Darius I (DNb, 50-60): The Old Persian text in the light of an Aramaic version', BSOAS XLIV, 1981, 1-7.

astrian in character, as are the ethics of Darius' utterances, with their stress on wisdom and justice, self-discipline and resoluteness in right action.

Darius' policy towards alien faiths

i) *The Egyptians*

In his attitude towards the faiths of the 'anarya', the non-Iranian peoples, Darius followed the tolerant, pragmatic policy of his predecessors. In Egypt he still used as his agent Udja-Hor-resenet, who was, it seems, at Susa when Darius attained the throne. From there the king sent him back to his homeland to restore the 'Houses of Life' which were associated with the Egyptian temples—places where the holy books and inscriptions were kept, and where medicine and theology were studied.[185] One of these was at Sais, and an inscription there describes the king, in the same terms used of Cambyses, as 'Darius, born of Neith, mistress of Sais; image of Rē, whom Rē has placed upon his throne'.[186]

To make these undertakings possible, Darius restored in part the temple-revenues curtailed by Cambyses; and benefactions by him towards individual temples are also recorded in inscriptions. His greatest lavishness in this respect was the building of a huge temple to Amun-Rē in the oasis of El Khargeh.[187] Traces of his activities have been found also at Abusir and perhaps at El Kab;[188] and he gave support to the Apis-Osiris cult at Memphis, where pious graffiti were left by Persian officials during his reign.[189] Polyaenus says that Darius offered a reward for the finding of a new Apis-bull, when one had died;[190] but this story probably refers properly to Cambyses, and has merely been transferred to Darius,[191] who not only succeeded in presenting himself to the Egyptian priests (despite his reconquest of their land) as a benefactor, but who remained in power, and so was a ruler to be praised and conciliated.[192] Yet with Darius too tolerance depended naturally on the loyalty of his subjects, and he took measures to prevent the Egyptian priests regaining too much power. Thus documents survive containing his instructions to

[185] See Posener, Première domination perse, 24-5, 175. On the recording of Egyptian law at Darius' orders see, with references, Kraeling, Brooklyn Aramaic Papyri, 29-30.

[186] Posener, op. cit., 50-63, 178-9.

[187] See H. E. Winlock et al., The temple of Hibis in El Khārgeh Oasis, Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, Egyptian Expedition Publications 13, 14, 17, 1938-1953.

[188] See Posener, op. cit., 179; Kienitz, Politische Geschichte Ägyptens, 62.

[189] See Posener, op. cit., 177-8 with nos. 24-6, 31-4.

[190] VII.xi.7.

[191] See K. M. T. Atkinson, JAOS 76, 170-1, and cf. above, p. 73

[192] For the tradition of Darius' cordial relations with the Egyptian priests see Diodorus, I.95.

Pherendates, satrap of Egypt, to intervene in certain circumstances in the appointment of the high priest at the temple of Khnum in Elephantine.[193]

A statue of Darius has been found at Susa, larger than lifesize, which, being carved of local limestone, is thought to have been a copy made there by Egyptian craftsmen of an original erected in the temple of the god Atum at Heliopolis.[194] The statue is set on a rectangular block, on whose sides are carved small kneeling figures, who raise their hands, palms upward, as if supporting the ground on which the king treads. They are identified by Egyptian hieroglyphs as representing the peoples of the empire—a familiar motif of Achaemenian art. On the folds of Darius' robe are cut equally familiar words in Old Persian, Babylonian and Elamite cuneiform;[195] 'A great god is Ahuramazda, who created this earth, who created yonder sky, who created man, who created happiness for man, who made Dārayavahu king'. The inscriptions continue, more specifically: 'Behold the statue of stone which Dārayavahu the King had made in Egypt in order that he who hereafter shall see it may know that a Persian man holds Egypt ... I am Dārayavahu ... May Ahuramazda protect me and all that has been done by me'.

Beside these orthodox Zoroastrian sentiments quite others are expressed in Egyptian hieroglyphs delicately carved on the statue and base.[196] These declare Darius to be 'the perfect god who rejoices in Maāt, he whom Atum, lord of Heliopolis, has chosen to be master of all that is encompassed by the solar orb, for he recognizes him as his son, his steward ... The goddess Neith has given him the bow which she loosens, in order that he may defeat all his enemies'. The inscriptions accord Darius a series of traditional Pharaonic titles ('perfect god' being one of them), and end by describing the statue itself as an 'image made in the exact likeness of the perfect god, master of the Two Lands, which His Majesty had made in order that a monument of him should be set up abidingly, and that his person should be remembered beside his father, Atum ... for the length of eternity'.

Atum was a name by which the Egyptian sun-god, Rē, was worshipped, and in the syncretic pantheon Rē was regarded as the child

[193] See W. Spiegelberg, Drei demotische Schreiben aus der Korrespondenz des Pherendates, Sb.PAW 1928, 604 ff.

[194] On it see the articles by N. Kervran, D. Stronach, F. Vallat and J. Yoyotte, JA 1972, 235-66, with plates; and again, with other articles by J. Perrot, J. Trichet and M. Roaf, DAFI 4, 1974.

[195] See Vallat, JA 1972, 249-50. The opening lines are those of Darius' tomb inscription, and occur also elsewhere.

[196] See Yoyotte, ibid., 254-9.

of Neith, goddess of Sais. The Egyptian priests taught that he had created this ordered world—that is, Egypt and the lands ruled by its Pharaohs; and that his will was that it should be governed according to Maāt, the personification of a principle 'which is at once truth, justice, private morality and public order, and which is opposed to disorder in customs and institutions, and to wickedness and falsehood. This harmony is re-established each morning when the sun drives away the powers of darkness. On the level of political life here below, it is menaced by those who plot against authority, and by the revolts and attacks of barbarous peoples. The king of Egypt is the representative chosen by [Rē] to maintain order'.[197]

The Egyptian concept of Maāt was thus closely parallel to the Zoroastrian one of Aša, and the relationship claimed for the Pharaoh with Rē to that claimed for the Persian king with Ahuramazda.[198] Udja-Hor-resenet doubtless expounded these matters to Darius and his priests, as he had done earlier to Cambyses and the magi of his day; and so the acceptance by the Persian king of the Pharaoh's role in Egypt, politically highly desirable, could have been shown to contain little that was actively objectionable in Iranian eyes. In cult the two peoples were far apart, a fact illustrated by the Egyptian representation of the goddess Maāt as a gracious little lady, seated and wearing an ostrich plume on her head; her statue, carried in the hollow of their hands like a doll, was regularly given by the Pharaohs as an offering to her 'father', Rē.[199] But Egyptian observances were enacted only in Egypt—a remote place for most of Darius' subjects; and for the Zoroastrians who saw Darius' great statue in Susa the Egyptian hieroglyphs would in any case have been no more than elegant ornamentation, and a symbol of their king's conquest of yet another foreign land.

This statue was, it seems, one of a pair set on either side of a monumental gateway. The mutilated head of another colossal statue, also attributed to Darius, has been found elsewhere at Susa.[200] As well as the Pharaohs, the Assyrian, Babylonian and Elamite kings had all been accustomed to setting up inscribed statues of themselves; and with such precedents it is likely that Darius and his successors erected many royal statues which time has destroyed. Herodotus records that Darius even had a statue of beaten gold made of Artystone, daughter of Cyrus

[197] Ibid., 259.
[198] The parallel is drawn by Yoyotte, ibid., 265.
[199] See S. Sauneron, A Dictionary of Egyptian civilization (ed. G. Posener), Eng. transl., London 1962, 155.
[200] See Ghirshman, Persia, 140 with fig. 189.

and best loved of his queens.[201] But no images of yazatas were yet set up to match those of alien gods.

ii) *The Elamites*

In his inscription at Behistun Darius, speaking of a revolt against him in Elam, states that he sent a Persian general who 'smote and crushed the Elamites, and captured the chief of them; he was led to me and I killed him. Then the country became mine. ... Those Elamites were hostile and they did not worship Ahuramazda. I worshipped Ahuramazda; by the will of Ahuramazda, as was my desire, so I did to them'.[202] The Elamites are the only non-Iranian people who are anywhere reproached for not worshipping the 'god of the Iranians'; and the reason is clearly that these ancient inhabitants of Persia were in a special relationship to the conquerors of their land, and that some of them had in fact adopted the cult of Ahuramazda, while continuing to venerate their own gods. Some of these 'good' Elamites were employed at Persepolis, and received (as the cuneiform tablets from there show [203]) grants of food and wine with which to make offerings to their own as well as to Persian divinities. This is a striking example, at their own threshold, of the Achaemenians' tolerance for the beliefs of the 'anarya', and their readiness to support these, as long as those who held them were submissive and peaceable.

iii) *The Jews*

The exiled Jews who had returned to Jerusalem in the time of Cyrus had failed to rebuild the temple there; but 'in the second year of Darius the king' the prophets Haggai and Zechariah began to urge that the work be taken in hand, and the foundations were at last laid. The Persian satrap challenged the legality of this act, and when the Jews claimed the authority of an edict by Cyrus, he wrote to Darius asking that search might be made among the royal records at Babylon concerning the matter. A memorandum of the edict was eventually found, not there but at Ecbatana, 'in the palace that is in the province of the Medes'; and Darius not only, in this as in other matters, upheld Cyrus' decree, but commanded that funds for the rebuilding should be provided out of the tribute of the satrapy, and that sacrificial animals, corn, wine and whatever else was necessary should be given to the priests in Jerusalem, so

[201] VII.69.
[202] DB V 3-17.
[203] See the following chapter.

that they might offer sacrifices there to their God, 'and pray for the life of the king, and of his sons'.[204]

The king's generosity (no different in essence from that which he showed the Egyptians and the Elamites) had an obvious political ingredient, in that Palestine was strategically placed on the road from Persia to Egypt, and there was clear advantage in having the Jews as loyal and quiet subjects; but however pragmatic his motives, Darius undoubtedly gave the Jews renewed cause to feel gratitude to their Zoroastrian rulers. His orders were swiftly carried out, and the Jews finished building the temple 'according to the commandment of the God of Israel, and according to the commandment of Cyrus and Darius . . . king of Persia . . . in the sixth year of Darius the king'.[205] Thereafter down the generations prayers must have gone up regularly in Jerusalem for the welfare of the Achaemenian King of kings.

iv) *In Drangiana*

Throughout the ancient history of Iran the eastern regions are less well known than the western ones, because of the absence of written records; and there is no literary evidence to shed light on a remarkable building whose remains have been uncovered at Dahan-i Ghulaman, a town of the Achaemenian period in Drangiana (Seistan). The ruins of this town were excavated in the 1960's, and what appears to have been an imposing temple was brought to light.[206] This was built of mud-brick, but had resemblances, it seems, in layout and architecture to the palaces of Persepolis. This has led to its being assigned to the late sixth or early fifth century B.C., a date supported by the few pottery fragments found. Such a building could hardly have been erected without the approval of the Great King—that is Darius, or possibly his son Xerxes. Moreover, the town in which the temple stood appears to have been deliberately founded in the early Achaemenian epoch, where no town had previously existed.

Given such data, one might expect the temple to be a Zoroastrian one, especially since Drangiana was an old centre of the faith. But not only

[204] Ezra V.1-VI.10. Concerning this memorandum see Bickerman, Studies in Jewish and Christian History I, 72-4.

[205] Ezra VI.14-15.

[206] See U. Scerrato, 'Excavations at Dahan-i Ghulaman (Seistan-Iran). First Preliminary Report (1962-1963)', EW XVI, 1966, 9-30; 'L'edificio sacro di Dahan-i Ghulaman (Sistan)', Atti del Convegno 'La Persa e il mondo greco-romano', Rome 1965, 457-70; 'Religious Life at Dahan-e Ghulaman', SAA 1977, ed. M. Taddei, Naples 1979, II 709-35; K. Schippmann, Feuerheiligtümer, 50-7.

are no Zoroastrian temples known from this early period, the temple at Dahan-i Ghulaman has installations and traces of observances which seem wholly unreconcileable with the Zoroastrian cult. Its buildings stood round a large, almost square courtyard with a single entrance on the south side; and they consisted of four large porticoes, each with a double row of square pillars, open to the courtyard. In the four corners were square rooms, with stairways in them leading to an upper storey or the roof. In the centre of the courtyard were three large rectangular altars in a row, each raised on a base with steps up to it (the arrangements of the steps being identical for two of them, but different for the third). The top parts of the altars are missing, but it is calculated that they must have stood at least 2.10 m. (nearly 7 ft.) high. They were hollow, and fire was evidently kindled inside them, as the bricks show marks of burning.

In all four porticoes there stood what the excavator has termed 'altar-ovens'. These were usually set in pairs, either on opposite sides of a pillar or against a wall; and 'must have had the appearance of a small chest covered with bricks forming a sloping roof'.[207] Subsequently these ovens were demolished and the remains plastered over; and thirteen new and elaborate ovens were installed in two of the porticoes. These had a rectangular lower compartment for the fire, with a hole for tending it, and an upper one with an ogival vaulted roof, separated from the lower one by a clay diaphragm, and completely open on one side. A slot to one side of the diaphragm allowed flames to rise up from the lower compartment, searing the underside of the vault, but not directly touching anything in the upper compartment.

In another portico there were installed three large troughs. One of them had traces of having had fire lit in it, and still contained a quantity of 'greasy-looking ashes mixed with animal bones'. The bones had been crushed into tiny pieces and burnt. 'All over the floor there was an immense quantity of residue from fire, ashes and crushed bones'.[208] The troughs have been identified as 'elongated cooking pits', such as are still widely used in the Near East for preparing food for big family and social gatherings; and in general, it has been pointed out, apart from the three great altars in the courtyard, the installations in the temple were all intended for cooking food; and their size and number suggest that the temple was much used for gatherings on festival days, with the preparation and ritual partaking of meals.

[207] Scerrato in SAA 1977, II 716.

[208] Ibid., 722, 723.

This in itself would accord admirably with Zoroastrian practice. What, however, is wholly unZoroastrian is the mingling of animal bones in the embers of fire; for in the age-old Iranian ritual, strictly enforced in Zoroastrianism, all that may come into direct contact with fire are the three offerings made to it itself: clean dry wood, incense, and a small portion of fat which feeds the flames, liquifies and disappears. Great care must be taken to prevent anything which is cooked coming into direct contact with fire.[209] The second series of ovens, with their separate upper compartments, would therefore be acceptable in Zoroastrian practice, but not the remains in the cooking-troughs: and 'clean' and 'unclean' usages could hardly be permitted side by side in a Zoroastrian building.

The temple at Dahan-i Ghulaman appears, therefore, to be yet another instance of early Achaemenian religious tolerance. Just as Darius provided the means to build temples to Amun-Rē and to Yahweh, and to offer sacrifices to Elamite gods, so here in Drangiana, it seems, he allowed a place of worship to be built by the autochthonos inhabitants. The invading Iranians were clearly powerful in this area, and had established, as Zoroastrians, a kingdom to the east of Lake Kąsaoya (the Hamun Lake) in prehistoric times;[210] but they had not, it appears, wholly absorbed the native people—the heirs of an old civilization—by the sixth century, any more than the Persians had by then wholly absorbed the Elamites (some of whom kept their identity indeed throughout the Achaemenian period, and were able to establish the small independent kingdom of Elymais in Seleucid times). The ancient people of Drangiana had been numerous as well as rich;[211] and their land, like Palestine, had a strategic importance for the Achaemenians, controlling as it did routes eastward to the Indus plain. Peace and good order there were clearly desirable; and hence, presumably, the religion of the local people received due royal encouragement.[212] How long this was continued is unfortunately not clear, since at some still unknown date the town of Dahan-i Ghulaman was abandoned, it is thought because of a dwindling water-supply. Later a farming village grew up in what had been its western area; and in a room in one of its houses was found a 'fire-holder' of Zoroastrian type. This had a broad top with six steps, set on a slender shaft which rose from a small, plain base. In the top was 'a central hemispherical receptacle for the fire'.[213]

[209] See HZ I 153-5, 297.

[210] See HZ I 274; and at length Gh. Gnoli, Time and Homeland, Ch. IV.

[211] This has been established primarily by Italian excavations at Shahr-i Sokhta in Seistan, see R. Biscione, S. Salvatori and M. Tosi, La Città Bruciata nel Deserto Salato, Venice 1977; and more generally M. Tosi, 'The Proto-Urban Cultures of Eastern Iran and the Indus Civilization...', SAA 1977, I 149-71.

[212] That the religion practised at Dahan-i Ghulaman was probably not Zoroastrian was suggested by G. Tucci, 'On Swāt. The Dards and Connected Problems', EW XXVII, 1977, 13-14. (Cited by Scerrato, with concurrence, SAA 1977, II 733 n. 1. Cf. Gnoli, Time and Homeland, 71 n. 80.) That it was probably not even Indo-Iranian, or Indo-Aryan, does not appear to have been considered.

[213] Scerrato, art. cit., 727 with figs. 18, 19.

CHAPTER EIGHT

FINDS OF RELIGIOUS INTEREST AT PERSEPOLIS

Excavations in the 1930's of the Persepolis Treasury, and one area of the fortifications, brought to light a remarkable quantity of inscribed material, in Elamite and Aramaic. These discoveries raised great hopes of clear light being shed on the religion of the early Achaemenians, but such hopes were to be disappointed. The texts proved strictly practical in scope, and although numerous they were in general brief and repetitive. Nevertheless they yielded, to close and laborious study, not only valuable data for social and economic history, but also interesting if perplexing facts for the study of religion, which supplement the carefully weighed pronouncements of the royal inscriptions.

The Elamite tablets

In the years 1933 to 1934 excavations at the north-eastern corner of the Persepolis fortifications unearthed a collection of some 30,000 clay tablets and fragments of tablets inscribed in the Elamite language and cuneiform script; and two years later a smaller collection of over 750 such tablets and fragments was found in the ruins of the Treasury.[1] Decipherment (a slow and difficult task [2]) showed that the fortification tablets dated from the thirteenth to the twenty-eighth year of Darius, i.e. 509-494; and the Treasury ones from the thirtieth year of Darius to the seventh year of his grandson, Artaxerxes I, i.e. from 492-458. The fortification tablets 'deal with administrative transfers of food commodities ... The texts may be divided into two main groups: those which are concerned with large operations (movement of commodities from place to place, assignments for broad general purposes and so on), and those which detail apportionments to the ultimate consumer'.[3] The Treasury tablets are concerned essentially with payments in silver to workmen for specific tasks. The texts in general contain a number of theophoric names, some of which have already been considered, above, in connection with pre-Zoroastrian beliefs;[4] and among the second group

[1] For the original publications see p. 14 n. 2, and add the following: Cameron, 'Persepolis Treasury Tablets Old and New', JNES XVII, 1958, 161-76; 'New Tablets from the Persepolis Treasury', JNES XXIV, 1965, 167-92; Hallock, 'A new look at the Persepolis Treasury tablets', JNES XIX, 1961, 90-100; The Evidence of the Persepolis tablets, Middle East Centre, Cambridge 1971.
[2] Many tablets still remain to be published.
[3] Hallock, PFT, 1.
[4] See above, p. 15 ff.

of fortification tablets there are some documents directly concerned with matters of religious cult.[5]

Priests and ceremonies in the fortification tablets

A small number of fortification tablets record the issue of foodstuffs and wine or beer for religious observances. The issue is sometimes made to an individual who is distinguished only by his proper name; but sometimes the recipient is described as a priest. There are two terms for a priest: Elamite 'šatin', and Iranian 'magus'. The former occurs considerably more often.[6]

In one set of these tablets, which concern only 'šatin', or individuals mentioned by proper name alone, the formula used is brief: '7 measures of grain, supplied by Bakamira, Anbaduš the šatin received and used for (the god) Humban;'[7] '6 measures of wine, supplied by Šakkana, Bapda the šatin received and used for the gods';[8] '30 measures of grain, supplied by Manyakka, Akšimašra received and delivered, and received in exchange 3 sheep, and delivered (the sheep) for the gods at the shrine(?)'.[9]

In a larger group of these tablets it is stated that the commodities issued are for the 'lan' ceremony. 'Lan' is an Elamite word of uncertain meaning, although it is suggested that it may have signified literally a 'sending forth'.[10] Its application in these texts appears to be as a technical term for 'act of worship' in general; for although again most of the recipients are given only their proper names, which are sometimes Persian, sometimes Elamite, several have the title 'magus', and two or three that of 'šatin'. The common formulas are illustrated by the following texts: '4 measures of flour, supplied by Upirrada, Da'urisa received for the dauṣa of the lan ceremony';[11] '12 measures of figs, supplied by Narezza, Piršamarda the magus received for the dauṣa of the lan ceremony at Narezzaš';[12] '5 measures of grain Umbaba the šatin received: 1 measure for the lan ceremony...'.[13] Four men who receive issues for the 'lan' ceremony, Tarmiya[14] and Aššika,[15] Kurka the magus[16] and

[5] Especially the tablets numbered PF 336-7 and 741-74, on which see Hallock, PFT, 18-9, 25-6.
[6] See Hallock, PFT, glossary pp. 723, 755 s.v. Makuš, šatin.
[7] PF 340.
[8] PF 369.
[9] PF 364.
[10] Hallock, op. cit., 25.
[11] PF 763.
[12] PF 769.
[13] PF 1956.1.
[14] PF 754.
[15] PF 768.
[16] PF 757, 2036.

Irdakurraddus the magus [17] (all bearing, it is thought, Iranian names) are further described as 'lan performers' (if the latter word is correctly interpreted).

Commodities are given for the 'lan' ceremony sometimes as a single issue, sometimes recurrently for several months, sometimes monthly for a whole year. They include flour, grain, dates, figs and wine, but always only one of these at a time This makes it impossible to identify the 'lan' ceremony with any known Zoroastrian observance, for there is no existing or recorded Zoroastrian act of worship at which the offering of a single item of food or drink is made.The word *dauṣa* (Elamite *da-u-ša-um*) in the above texts is held, however, to be an Iranian word, the Old Persian equivalent of Avestan *zaothra* 'libation, oblation, offering'.[18]

Another apparently Iranian word which occurs in connection with the 'lan' ceremony is *tamšiyam*, interpreted as a rendering of Old Persian **daušiyam*, meaning 'what serves for satisfaction, propitiatory offering' (cf. Avestan *zaoša* 'pleasure'). [19] The following are examples of its usage: '4 measures of flour, supplied by Upiradda, Yašda the haturmakša at Matezziš received for the tamšiyam of the lan ceremony'.[20] The term also occurs independently, as in the following text: '200 measures of grain, supplied by Karkiš, Hupannunu the šatin received and used for the tamšiyam ceremony of the gods'.[21] The term perhaps occurs also, differently represented, in the compound *baka-daušiya*, interpreted as a rendering of Old Persian **bagadaušiya* 'god-propitiatory offerings'.[22] There are no Avestan equivalents for these terms, although each Zoroastrian act of worship is offered 'for the satisfaction' (*khšnūmaine*) of a named yazata. There are in addition two words for ceremonies, **nuaš* and **dausika*, which occur only once, and whose meaning and origin have not even been guessed at.[23]

The mixture of Iranian and Elamite ritual terms in these texts is striking; but whether a magus would himself speak of a 'lan' ceremony cannot be known. It may be that the Elamite scribes adhered in this to a general term of their own as a written convention, rendering it aloud, for Persians, by an Iranian equivalent. As for the use of specifically Iranian ritual terms in Elamite texts, this is hardly surprising, since the Persians

[17] PF 758.
[18] See Cameron, PTT, 71. On *zaothra* see HZ I 149.
[19] See Gershevitch apud Hallock, op. cit., 19.
[20] PF 761, cf. 762, 765.
[21] PF 366, cf. 367, 761, 762, 765, 2030.
[22] See Gershevitch, loc. cit. in n. 19. The term occurs in PF 336, 337, 348, 349.
[23] PF 776, 772.

were the dominant people. Thus some of the 'šatins' bear unmistakably Persian names, presumably given by Elamite priests to their sons.[24]

The fact that some recipients of the specified goods are distinguished as 'lan performers' may mean that others were simply intermediaries, accepting them to deliver for a religious ceremony at which they would not themselves officiate. This supposition is strengthened by the fact that on four tablets commodities are issued for the 'lan' ceremony to a man described as a 'haturmakša', as for example: '6 measures of flour . . . Da'urisa the haturmakša received as rations for the lan ceremony'; [25] '. . . flour supplied by Upiradda, Yašda the haturmakša (at) Matezziš received (for) the tamšiyam of the lan ceremony'; [26] for in by far the larger number of references to a 'haturmakša' the person concerned appears as a middleman engaged in collecting some kind of goods, each haturmakša according to his speciality (grain, flour, fruit or wine), and delivering these in bulk to the royal officials. He often operates in a named area, and in conjunction with men described as fruit-handlers, grain-handlers etc.[27]

There is another category of middlemen named in the tablets as 'hatarmabattiš', whose work was to receive goods of various kinds and distribute them, as ordered, to specified groups of workers employed through the Treasury. For example, Karkiš the hatarmabattiš receives 9 measures of grain and gives it to 90 workers subsisting on rations, 'whose apportionments are set by Iršena'.[28] The designation occurs with a variant 'haturmabattiš';[29] and there is also an 'atrubattiš/haturrubattiš', who performs the same functions,[30] so that his title too seems to be merely a variant on 'hatarmabattiš'.

Unfortunately these professional designations for those who appear to have been modest tradesmen first became known to Iranists out of context, in lists; and an elevated interpretation was given to the term 'hatarmabattiš', namely that it was a rendering of an Old Persian **atharvapati-* 'master of priests'.[31] No such title is attested anywhere, however, in Iranian tradition; and the texts when published showed that the activities of the 'hatarmabattiš' were in fact lowly and secular.

[24] Cf. above, p. 32 with n. 110.
[25] PF 741, cf. 1953.
[26] PF 761, cf. 762.
[27] E.g. PF 1990:11, 2078:6.
[28] PF 1940:6; cf. 1949:1-3.
[29] See Hallock, PFT, 694, s.v.
[30] See ibid., 671, 695 s.v.
[31] Gershevitch apud Hallock, PFT 694 s.v.; Hinz, 'Die elamischen Buchungstäfelchen der Darius-Zeit', Orientalia 39, 1970, 429.

Nevertheless, even after this it was seriously argued that although 'persons with the title *āthravapati- [sic] are always entrusted with the care of work-people ... these responsible tasks of issuing rations could only be put in the hands of an unprejudiced, upright man. So a high priest would be considered especially fitted for it. So it is entirely possible that this is a matter of an officially established field of activity for a high priest'.[32] The absurdity of this is palpable, even if one does not pause to consider that the work-people concerned were mainly foreigners, and included newly-delivered women— both 'unclean' sets of persons, with whom no priest would willingly have contact, let alone a high priest.

There was slightly more justification, because of the connection in four tablets with the 'lan' ceremony, for struggling to make the 'haturmakša' into a priest. One interpretation proposed was that this title rendered a Persian word corresponding to Avestan 'ātrə-vaxš', a name for the serving priest who tends the ritual fire. Whether this is an ancient name is not known; but an equation with it was in any case rejected when it was realised that 'haturmakša' had a variant in the Elamite texts: 'an-tar-ma-ša'.[33] These texts moreover clearly established the 'haturmakša's' activity as a secular middleman. Not all Iranists, however, could bring themselves to abandon the first attractive interpretation; and since the duty of the 'ātrə.vaxš' was to look after the ritual fire, it was solemnly maintained that the 'haturmakša' must have been primarily the priest of a fire-temple, who 'in addition to his religious activity was entrusted with an important practical task' i.e. the handling of food commodities.[34] Moreover, since the 'haturmakša's' work was often in a named locality, and nineteen such place-names are recorded in this connection in the tablets, it was claimed that in each of these places 'there must also have been a sanctuary in which the fire was kept'.[35] Such rash deductions, made in defiance of the evidence, can only be regarded as unscholarly. What has rather to be admitted is that the element *hatur-/atur-/hatar-* in these various tradesmens' names has a fortuitous resemblance to the words *ātar-* 'fire', *atharvan-* 'priest', and that its actual meaning has yet to be established.

[32] Heidemarie Koch, Die religiösen Verhältnisse der Dareioszeit, Untersuchungen an Hand der elamischen Persepolistäfelchen, Göttinger Orientforschungen, III Reihe, Iranica IV, Wiesbaden 1977, 166-7.

[33] See Gershevitch apud Hallock, PFT 25-6. As well as *an-tar-ma-ša* in PF 1957:34 there is the proper name Ha-tur-ma-ša in PF 752. Hinz, Neue Wege 109, held nevertheless to the interpretation of an OP **ātrvaxša*, first proposed by Cameron, PTT 7-8. (Against Cameron's interpretation of Elamite *ra-ti-u-u-iš hu-ti-ra* as representing an OP cognate of Av. *raēthwiškara*, ibid. 5-6, see Gershevitch, Asia Major, n.s. II, 1951, 132-3.)

[34] Koch, op. cit., 160. Similarly Hinz, Orientalia 39, 429-30.

[35] Koch, loc. cit., cf. Hinz, loc. cit.

The priestly title *atharvan* was sought on the Elamite tablets, not only in the title 'haturmabattiš', but also in two proper names: Haturma (variant Atturma) and Atsarma (variant Atsama). All these forms, it was suggested, rendered an Old Persian nominative singular **atharvā* (~ Av. *āthrava*).[36] This Old Iranian priestly title is not otherwise recorded, however, in Achaemenian Iran; and the interpretation of proper names, necessarily without a significant context and in the obscurity of the Elamite syllabary, must remain in such cases uncertain.

The priestly title 'magus' does, however, seem to occur several times as a proper name in the Elamite tablets, but as one borne by tradesmen, not priests, as in the following instances: 'Magus the grain-handler'; 'from Magus at the storehouse'; 'Nuttima and Magus, two store-keepers'.[37] If Elamite *ma-ku-iš* is really a rendering here also of Iranian *magus* (and not a snare, like the *hatur-* compounds), then one must assume that these were men who, born into priestly families, had sought a secular livelihood instead of following their ancestral calling. This would be the same development, at a humble level, which we have already seen attested among the higher ranks of the priesthood;[38] and presumably, if this was the case, 'Magus' was a nickname given such men by fellow-workers of lay parentage.

The chief point of interest concerning the Persian priesthood to be deduced from the Persepolis material, together with the Behistun inscription, is that in fact only one title, that of 'magus', appears to have been in use in the early Achaemenian period. There is no trace at that time, through ecclesiastical titles, of an institutionalized religious hierarchy, or any lifelong specialization in particular priestly duties— although it must be assumed that western Iran had its scholar-priests, the equivalent of the eastern Iranian 'aēthrapati', as well as considerable differences in wealth and standing in the ranks of the magi generally.[38]

The scribes of Persepolis

Despite the fact that many of the names on the Elamite tablets are Iranian, it seems likely that the men who wrote the Elamite texts on tablets of clay were themselves Elamites, descendants of generations of scribes who had kept the accounts and records of the Elamite kings of Anshan, and then of their Persian conquerors. In the Marv Dasht Elamites had probably worked for Persians for well over a hundred years,

[36] See Gershevitch, 'Amber', 189-90; sceptical, Mayrhofer, OnP 8.499, 8.148.

[37] PF 1945:10, 1955:18, 1974:10-11.

[38] See above, p. 84; and in more detail on ranks in the priesthood below, pp. 228-9.

accepting dictation in Persian and setting the meaning down in Elamite. The latter language remained the local vehicle of written communication, but as such gradually became more and more dominated by the language of the ruling Persians.[39]

Twenty of the Persepolis texts, their editor has remarked,[40] 'record the delivery of the hides of sheep, goats, cattle, and camels, usually to treasuries at various sites. It seems likely that the hides were to serve as writing material since in other texts we find reference to a "tablet on hide" (PF 1986:31) and "Babylonian scribes (writing on) hides" (e.g. PF 1810: 6 f.), where "hide" presumably means parchment. The writing on parchment would be Aramaic'. Aramaic, used probably in the service of Iranians since the foundation of the first Median kingdom, was practical not only because of its convenience (since it was written alphabetically, and could be set down on a variety of materials), but because unlike Elamite it was widely understood. It seems likely, therefore, that it made steady progress in Achaemenian chancellery usage from the time of Cyrus onward.

Two of the Elamite tablets at Persepolis refer to Persian 'boys' being employed as copyists. One runs as follows: '111 measures of grain, supplied by Sarakuzziš, Persian "boys" (who) are copying texts, subsisting on rations (at) Pittannan, assigned by Šuddayauda, received as rations ... 16 "boys", 4½. 13 "boys" 3. Total 29 workers (*kurtaš*)'.[41] The other tablet is almost identical, but records wine instead of grain being issued to 16 'boys' only.[42] In this second text the Persians are referred to as both 'boys' and 'men'; and it has been pointed out that the term 'boy' is used generally in the tablets for a man in a subordinate position.[43] It is only in these two texts that Persians ('Paršib') are categorized as 'kurtaš', a word otherwise used only of foreigners, and covering artisans, servants, slaves and conscripted labourers.[44] The Persian copyists seem to belong therefore to a humble social group; and possibly they were masons, chipping out uncomprehendingly cuneiform texts drawn for them on stone.[45]

[39] Cf. above, p. 32. The probability that the scribes of the tablets were Elamites who had learnt the language of their rulers, rather than Persians who had acquired Elamite, is strengthened by the consideration that it is very unlikely that the dominant Persians would also have learnt to call their own priests indifferently 'šatin' or 'magus', and to worship Humban, Adad and other alien gods, see further below.

[40] Hallock, PFT, 4 (referring to PF 58-77).

[41] PF 871.

[42] PF 1137.

[43] See Hallock, PFT, 29-30.

[44] See Hallock, PFT, 717 s.v.; Gershevitch, 'The alloglottography of Old Persian', TPS 1979, 150-1.

[45] Otherwise Hinz, Neue Wege, 22; Gershevitch, art. cit., 144 n. 7.

The gods of the fortification tablets

A number of the commodities issued for religious observances are designated, as we have seen, simply 'for the gods'.[46] Other tablets specify the divine being or beings for whose worship they are intended. In this latter group the god most frequently honoured, with fourteen occurrences of his name, is Humban, the Elamite supreme being.[47] The Babylonian rain-god Adad is venerated once alone,[48] and once with Humban;[49] and he appears also with 'the great god'.[50] The latter has been interpreted, in this Persian setting, as Ahuramazda,[51] but may well rather be the ever-unnamed Varuna 'the Baga', evidently enormously popular in Achaemenian Persia. This is the more likely because Ahuramazda himself and Mithra are mentioned, as one would expect, explicitly. Worship is offered once to Ahuramazda alone, through a man with an Iranian name, Irdabada (Artapāta);[52] and he is three times venerated with other divinities by Elamite šatin. The texts are as follows: '80 measures of grain ... Bakabana the šatin received, and (for) the divine tamšiyam (ceremony): 40 for (the god) Ahuramazda (as) a gift (?), 40 for (the god) Mišduši, he used (it)'.[53] '16 *marriš* (of) wine ... Appirka the šatin received, and used (it) for (the gods) Ahuramazda and Mithra-Baga and (the god) Šimut'.[54] '5.7 *marriš* (of) wine ... Turkama (?) the šatin received, and used (it) for the gods: 7 QA for (the god) Ahuramazda, 2 *marriš* for (the god) Humban, 1 *marriš* for the river Huputiš, 1 *marriš* for the river Rannakarra, 1 *marriš* for the river Šaušanuš'.[55] In the last text, although Ahuramazda is accorded his due precedence, the offering which he receives is by far the smallest. The god Šimut, honoured here after Ahuramazda, Mithra and the Baga,[56] is a major being of the Elamite pantheon; but Mišduši is unfamiliar, as are (not surprisingly) the names of the rivers to be venerated.

Other strange divine names are furnished by the only two tablets

[46] E.g. PF 356-377.

[47] E.g. PF 341-350. On the gods' names in the tablets see Hallock, PFT, 18-19.

[48] PF 587.

[49] PF 351.

[50] PF 353.

[51] See Hinz, Orientalia 39, 428-9.

[52] PF 771.

[53] PF 337.

[54] PF 338.

[55] PF 339.

[56] The interpretation of Elamite *mi-iš-še-ba-qa* as a rendering of OP Miṣa baga, i.e. 'god Mithra', was that of Gershevitch, see Hallock, PFT, 19 n. 11, and further Gershevitch, TPS 1969, 175. It was challenged by Hinz, art. cit. in n. 31, 428, who proposed seeing in it *visai bagā* 'all the gods'; but apart from other considerations this interpretation does not fit the contexts of PF 338 and 1957:1. On it as a *dvandva*, Mithra (and) the Baga, i.e. Varuna, see below, p. 283.

which specify the divinities honoured by men described as magi. In the first text these are again place-names—here of mountain and river: '12 measures of grain Ukpiš the magus received: 3 (as) rations of the lan ceremony, 3 for Mithra-Baga, 3 for Mount Ariaramnes, 3 for the river Ahinharišda'.[57] In the second text, however, there occurs once more an unfamiliar name for a divine being: '6 (measures of grain) Irdazana the magus . . . received: 2 for (the god) *Turme, 4 for Mithra-Baga'.[58] The first of these three divinities appears in one other text, with a slight variation of his name: '5 (measures of grain) Umbaba the šatin received: 1 for the lan (ceremony), 1 for (the god) *Turma, 1 for (the god) Mariraš, 1 for the . . ., 1 for Mithra-Baga'.[59] It seems unlikely that a magus worshipping at Persepolis under Darius would have venerated any but an Iranian god; and the suggestion has been made that *Turma/*Turme is a rendering of Old Persian *Durvā, nominative or vocative of *Durvan, the equivalent of Avestan Zurvan.[60] This interpretation is necessarily speculative; and the supposition that Zurvan was venerated by Persians as early as this runs counter to a number of weighty considerations, which must be left to a later chapter.

The only other known Iranian yazata who is mentioned in the Persepolis texts is Narišanka, the Avestan Nairyōsanha, an ancient messenger-god.[61] He appears in the following text: '7 (measures of grain) Upiš received: 3 for the lan (ceremony), 2 for Mount Širumanda, 2 for (the god) Narišanka'.[62] The Persepolis tablets contain, however, further unknown divine names, making their total more than that of the known ones. One of these, *Nabbazabba, is regarded as unquestionably Elamite; but efforts have been made to interpret all the rest as Iranian. In addition to *Mišduši and *Mariraš, which we have already met, there are recorded *Anturza (?),[63] *Pirdakamya,[64] and *Sākurziš.[65] Reinterpreted from the Elamite syllabary these, it is suggested, might possibly be understood as follows: *Mišduši perhaps as 'giving reward' (the feminine of the adjective which in Vedic appears as *mīdhvás*), used as a cult-epithet for the goddess of Fortune, Aši; [66] and *Mariraš perhaps as the Elamite rendering of Persian *Hvar-īra or *Hvar-ayara, that is to say, the sun-god Hvar in his aspect of lord of the rising sun (since the Elamite scribes did not distinguish between Persian 'v' and 'm').[67] The doubtful *Anturza (?) might represent a Persian Ātṛ-čā, nominative singular to Avestan *ātarəčar-* 'fire leaping forth, radiating' and so be an epithet of the fire god; [68] and *Pirdakamya might conceivably mask an Iranian *Bṛta-kāmya* 'Fulfiller of wishes', as a cult-epithet or divine name.[69] As for *Sākurziš, a connection has been sought between him and the name of the third Old Persian month, *Thāigarčiš (Elamite Sākurriziš)—itself of disputed interpretation.[70]

[57] PF 1955:1-3.
[58] PF 1957:1.
[59] PF 1956:1-2.
[60] See Gershevitch, TPS 1969, 183.
[61] See HZ I 60-1. On the Persepolis form see Gershevitch, 'Amber', 212-14.
[62] PF 1960:3-4.
[63] PF 770.
[64] PF 303.
[65] In an as yet unpublished text, see above, p. 25 n. 68.
[66] Gershevitch apud Hallock, PFT 732 s.v.; and TPS 1969, 174.

These interpretations are necessarily wholly tentative, because of the nature of the material; but if sound, they would bear out the evidence of Darius' own inscriptions, whose terminology, as we have seen, shows a lack of distinctively Zoroastrian influence on the religious vocabulary of the Achaemenian Persians. The worship by name of individual mountains and rivers, although not attested in known Zoroastrian usage, is not alien in character to a faith which encourages veneration of the good world created by Ahuramazda; and so it was hardly a practice which proselytizing Zoroastrians would have needed to end. On the positive side, it may be said that no Iranian divine being is named in the Elamite tablets who is characterized in the writings of the faith as a Daeva. Nor can it be proved that any Persian magus venerated non-Iranian gods, whereas it is clear that the Elamite šatin gave offerings to several Persian divinities. This accords with the well-established eclecticism of the Elamites, whose pantheon had long included alien gods.

Some theophoric names of Zoroastrian character

The meagre and somewhat puzzling evidence of the Elamite tablets with regard to the divinities worshipped at Persepolis can be supplemented by the testimony of theophoric names preserved on these tablets, and in the Aramaic texts also recovered from the treasury and fortifications. A number of these have already been considered with reference to the ancient beliefs of the Persians, all of which were compounded with the names or titles of yazatas who are also venerated in Zoroastrianism—most notably and frequently with those of the three Ahuras; [71] and there are only a few additional ones which can be considered as exclusively

[67] Gershevitch, TPS 1969, 173-4.
[68] Ibid., 166.
[69] So Hinz, Neue Wege, 114; Altiranisches Sprachgut der Nebenüberlieferungen, 68.
[70] See above, p. 25.
[71] See above, p. 15 ff.

Zoroastrian. Thus of the many names compounded with *arta* a high proportion appear to have been given in veneration of Arta as a divinity (rather than in honour of the principle of *arta*)—a concept which seems characteristic of Zoroaster's teachings.[72] Some clear examples are Artapāta 'Protected by Arta', Artadāta 'Given by Arta', Artabarzana 'Exalting Arta', Artazušta 'Beloved by Arta', and Artafarnah 'Having fortune through Arta'.[73] The name Arta-Mişa/Arta-Mithra is also attested, an example, it seems, of the well-known form of personal name which links those of two divinities.[74]

The fact that there were *arta-* names in the pagan period probably made Zoroastrian Persians all the readier to give names to their children which were formed with Arta's. Two of the other great Zoroastrian Ameša Spentas also appear to be honoured, though meagrely, in the Persepolis nomenclature. One is Arta's great partner, Vohu Manah, whose name can be read, as *Va(h)umanah, in Elamite *ma-u-man-na*, and possibly also *u-man-na*; [75] and the other is Khšathra. For him there appears a simple Khšathra,[76] as well as Khšathraka and Khšaşaka, and Khšathrabānu 'Having the radiance of Khšathra'.[77] That none of the other three Ameša Spentas is invoked in the theophoric names is hardly surprising, since they were of the feminine gender, and women's names are rare in the Persepolis finds. What is more remarkable is that in the developed Zoroastrian tradition only two of the six Ameša Spentas were ever regularly honoured in this way: Vohu Manah, whose name, as Vahman, Bahman, became one of the commonest personal names among Persian Zoroastrians; and Arta/Aša. Ašavahišt occurs as a personal name in Sasanian times, and other names were common which were compounded with Arta's.

Among the Persepolis names Rašnu the Judge is invoked with the compound Rašnudāta 'Given by Rašnu', and the hypocoristic Rašnuka.[78] As a yazata of justice he is prominent in Zoroastrianism, but he may already have been a close companion of Mithra in the ancient Ahuric religion.[79] Rāman occurs as a proper name on Aramaic documents from the treasury and fortifications,[80] and this might be the common

[72] See HZ I 27-8, 199-200.
[73] See OnP 8.572, 578, 596, 600, 592.
[74] OnP 8.589; Aramaic *'rtmtr*, see RT no. 33:3 (restored).
[75] OnP 8.1035 and 1717. On the latter in more detail see Hinz, Neue Wege, 117.
[76] RT no. 89:2 (Bowman takes this as a hypocoristicon).
[77] OnP. 8.1481, 561, 1508, 1480, 1522.
[78] OnP 8.1421. 1422.
[79] See HZ I 59.
[80] RT n. 39:3, with pp. 109-10.

noun meaning 'peace, joy', or it might be in honour of the Zoroastrian yazata Rāman, who is linked with both Mithra and Vayu.[81] Another name attested on the Elamite tablets, and elsewhere in Aramaic script, is Dāmidāta.[82] There is no dispute that this means 'Created (or Given) by the Creator', but it is uncertain to which divinity it refers. It seems probable that in ancient times it meant Varuna,[83] and so this may well be yet another traditional name in honour of 'the Baga'—the god who in Iran was never named. In later times, however, the adjective was understood to refer to Ahuramazda.

Among the many problematic names preserved in the Elamite syllabary is an *iz-ru-du-uk-ma*, which has been interpreted as Iranian *Zrutauxma 'Of Zurvan's seed'.[84] Names of this type are known, though not from the Persepolis tablets; but the problems concerning Zurvanite belief make the interpretation nevertheless doubtful. Among the other puzzling names on the tablets there may be some theophoric ones in honour of unknown divinities; but no name of any of the unfamiliar gods whose worship is recorded in the Elamite tablets has been identified in a theophoric personal name.

The established theophoric names of Persepolis bear testimony to the climate of belief prevailing in Persia in the reigns of Cambyses, Darius and Xerxes (for names given to children naturally reflect the convictions and tastes of their parents' generation). There is no discord between their witness and that of Darius' inscriptions, in which the king invokes Ahuramazda 'with all the gods'; and among the lesser divine beings explicitly honoured in the giving of names there is none who can be identified as a divinity rejected by Zoroaster as evil (as far as can be known, the gods Indra, Sarva and Nanhaithya).[85] It is instructive to compare the yazatas thus honoured by the Persepolis names with those similarly known to have been popularly venerated in Sogdia in Sasanian and early post-Sasanian times.[86] There all three Ahuras—Mazda, Mithra and the Baga—were, it seems, popularly worshipped, together with Nairyōsanha (*nryšnx*) and Haoma (*γwm*), Khvarenah (*prn*), Māh (*m'γ*, *m'x*) and Vāta (*w't*). Yima (*ymyh*) received reverence; and Verethraghna, surprisingly missing from the Persepolis nomenclature, was

[81] See HZ I 60, 80-1.
[82] OnP 8.349; Cowley, Aram. Papyri, no. 6:6.
[83] On Varuna's activity as creator (transferred it seems in Zoroastrianism to Ahuramazda) see HZ I 49-50.
[84] See Gershevitch, 'Amber', 197.
[85] See HZ I 53-5, 201. Against Gershevitch's tentative interpretation of the name *ku-un-da* as corresponding to the Av. demon's name Kunda see another proposal by Hinz, Neue Wege, 111.
[86] See Henning, 'A Sogdian god', BSOAS XXVIII, 1965, 242-54, and especially pp. 248, 252-3.

honoured (as *wšγn*). Instead of names compounded with the western Tiri's there appear ones formed with Tiš, for ancient Tištrya (Tišdāt 'Given by Tiš', Tišfarn 'Having fortune through Tiš', and others); but at this relatively late date (over a millennium after the Persepolis material) there appear unambiguously the names Zurvan (*'zrw'*), and Nana the Lady—(*nnδβ'mbn*)—that is, (it seems) 'Anāhita'.

Among the familiar yazatas of the Sogdian documents there are, however, divinities whose names are otherwise unknown: *Rēwaxš, *Taxšīč and *Lapat or *Dhapat.[87] We have met equally unknown beings on the Persepolis tablets; and it would seem probable that in former times the Zoroastrian church tolerated the worship of such local Iranian divinities as could be regarded as 'spenta'—lesser beings who in the terminology of another faith would be little more than minor saints. Perhaps already in the later Sasanian period such cults were discouraged in Persia proper, however; and in Muslim times, as the community contracted and its observances were curtailed, they apparently withered away. The presence of strange divine names in the Sogdian documents clearly makes caution all the more desirable in attempting to link all the unfamiliar ones of the Persepolis tablets with known Zoroastrian yazatas, either as cult epithets or dialect forms.

A Zoroastrian personal name

In addition to the proper names from Zoroastrian historical tradition known to have been given within the Achaemenian family itself—Vištāspa, Hutaosā, Pišišyaothna [88]—the Persepolis tablets supply a Zamašba, presumably in honour of Vistāspa's famous counsellor, Jāmāspa.[89]

The Persepolis tablets and the calendar

An important factor in the eventual neglect of the cults of local or very minor divinities was probably the creation of the Zoroastrian calendar, which (with its dedication of the days and months to major yazatas) had a powerful liturgical influence; and the Elamite tablets made a valuable contribution to the study of the history of this calendar by showing that down at least to the early years of the reign of Artaxerxes

[87] Henning, art. cit., 252-3, saw a resemblance between Sogdian *rywxš/ryw'γš* and Bactrian *Araeixro*. Subsequently V. A. Livshits, 'Avestijskoe Urvāxš.uxti', Peredneaziatskij Sbornik III, Moscow 1979, 160-7, 273 (cited by J. Asmussen, Altorientalische Forschungen VII, Berlin 1980, 167) sought to link Sogdian/Khwarezmian *rywxš-* with Gathic *urvâxš-* in Y.32.12, taking the latter to be the name of a divinity rejected by Zoroaster.

[88] See above, p. 41.

[89] OnP. 8.1821.

I the Achaemenians still used the Babylonian calendar, modifying it simply by replacing the month names with Old Persian ones, as Darius was known (from the Behistun inscription) to have done at the beginning of his reign.[90]

Religious scenes on Persepolis seal impressions

A number of the objects found in the Persepolis Treasury and fortifications bear seal impressions.[91] Some of these have motifs which appear also in the Persepolis sculptures: the figure in a winged circle, the winged disk, the crescent and disk, the hero triumphant and the lion-dangler. A smaller number show a religious scene, that is, a fire-holder or 'fire-altar', usually with the winged symbol above it and flanked by two lay worshippers or two attendant priests. None of the impressions is good enough to show any single 'fire-altar' perfectly, but they are sufficiently clear to establish that both known Achaemenian types are represented there.

The first type is essentially that of the fire-holders of Pasargadae, which is also that depicted on the tombs of Darius and his successors. It consists, that is, of a three-stepped top and base, joined by a rectangular shaft. In the best-known representation of an altar of this type on a seal-impression, from seal no. 20, 'five flames rise from the altar ... instead of the mass of gently undulating lines on the tomb design'.[92] The other type, shown on seals no. 22 and 23, is distinguished from the first by a bifurcated top, making it look as if it were crowned with battlements. This type is known only from seals; and the representation 'may indicate triangular processes with terraced edges at each of the four corners of a square altar top, leaving the center open for view of the ... fire'.[93] A battlemented top on a plain cube-shaped shaft is clearly shown on cylinder seals of the Achaemenian period found elsewhere; [94] and two rather blurred sealings at Persepolis display what appear to be altars of this type, although one, from seal no. 57, has perhaps a three-stepped base.[95] A seal of Egyptian provenance, dated to between 500 and 400 B.C., shows another such altar, with broad shaft, three-stepped top and two-stepped base; but there, perplexingly, a small animal,

[90] See Cameron, PTT, 34, 41.

[91] See Schmidt, Persepolis II, 4 ff. (who lists impressions from 77 seals).

[92] Ibid. (with Pl. 7).

[93] Ibid.

[94] See, e.g., L. Delaporte, Catalogues des cylindres orientaux et des cachets ... de la Bibliothèque nationale, Paris 1910, Pl. XXVII, no. 401; Survey IV, Pl. 123 F.

[95] See Schmidt, op. cit., p. 37 with Pl. 13, p. 43 with Pl. 15.

apparently a boar, is shown hanging head downwards between the bifurcations of the altar-top, over the flames.[96]

Altars of this second type are all shown flanked by lay worshippers, who usually wear a dentate crown and wide-sleeved Persian robe. They regularly raise one hand in the gesture of salutation, while holding some object (such as a three-lobed flower) in the other. On seal no. 20, however, the men who face the fire-altar both wear 'Median' dress. The figure on the right, which is the better preserved, can be clearly seen to be clad in tunic, trousers and the kandys. On his head he has the felt tiara, apparently with the side-flaps tied across his chin, over his beard. He has in his left hand a long slender staff, one end resting on the ground before him, and in his right he holds some stiff rods, generally recognized as the baresman. The figure facing him on the other side of the fire is also wearing 'Median' dress, although the details are blurred. He holds out two sticks towards the fire, their ends touching the flame, and appears to be tending it. Between the figure on the right and the fire is a table, slightly over knee-high, on which rests a large mortar with a pestle in it. Over the fire hovers the winged disk, the tips of the wings almost touching the heads of the two attendant figures.

The scene thus represented is a puzzling one. On the strength of the pestle and mortar the excavator of the seal declared that it undoubtedly 'pictures the haoma-ceremony';[97] and to this there has been general scholarly assent. It cannot, however, represent any enactment of that ceremony in known Zoroastrian usage; for at all the Zoroastrian acts of worship which include the crushing of haoma (Yasna, Visperad, Vendidad, Nirangdin) the celebrant is required to sit cross-legged, as close as possible to the good earth. The mortar is accordingly placed on a low stand before him, with fire also in a low container. It is very likely that these ritual requirements go back to pre-Zoroastrian times.[98] Further, the figure on the right has the baresman in his right hand, whereas a Zoroastrian priestly celebrant holds it in his left; and the long staff which he has in his left hand is not part of known Zoroastrian priestly equipment.

A remarkably similar figure is to be found on a little noticed stone relief from Dascylion, now in the Istanbul Museum.[99] This is carved in

[96] See B. Buchanan, Catalogue of the Ancient Near Eastern Seals in the Ashmolean Museum I: Cylinder Seals, Oxford 1966, no. 698, Pl. 45; P. R. S. Moorey, Ancient Iran, Ashmolean Museum 1975, Pl. XXIV.

[97] Schmidt, op. cit., 9.

[98] See HZ I 166-7.

[99] I am indebted to Dr. A. D. H. Bivar for telling me of this relief, and for showing me a photograph which he had taken of it. Cf. A. Büsing-Kolbe, JdI 92, 1977, 120-1.

Graeco-Persian style, like the better-known Dascylion sculpture of the two magi;[100] and like the Persepolis seal, it shows a man in right profile, facing in this case what appears to be the doorway of an Achaemenian building, with square frame and lintel. The figure's head has been destroyed, leaving only the bottom of the beard showing; but he is clad in 'Median' dress, including the kandys; and he again holds the baresman in his right hand and in his left a long thin staff, the tip resting on the ground a little in front of him. What is striking is that this, like other Achaemenian sculptures, was painted, and the paint in this case has not wholly worn away, so that his mantle (the kandys) can be clearly seen to be reddish-purple over a lighter-coloured tunic. The footgear too is dark, whereas the staff is painted white.

Purple was a 'warrior' colour in ancient Iran; and it is known that in Sasanian times nobles made use of the baresman for private religious observances.[101] It seems possible, therefore, that this Dascylion figure and the one on the Persepolis seal, each with baresman in right hand and staff in left, were both laymen, military commanders perhaps, who like working priests regularly wore 'Median' dress. Among the ancient Iranians haoma was widely drunk and enjoyed by warrior and poet as well as by priest and seer, playing a part in their lives not unlike that of mead among the ancient Teutonic peoples;[102] and possibly this was still the case to some extent among the Achaemenian Persians. Conceivably therefore the Persepolis seal shows a military man of rank presiding at some haoma-ceremony of a kind long since forgotten by the Zoroastrian community.

Another Achaemenian relief survives from Bünyän in Asia Minor, which again shows a figure in 'Median' costume with kandys.[103] He is bearded, and wears the tiara with its side-flaps, it seems, turned back. He too holds the baresman in his right hand, the left (somewhat damaged) being raised apparently in the familiar gesture of reverence or salutation. This figure is repeated on the sides of a rectangular stone block which has been interpreted as a 'fire-altar'; but unfortunately its top has been destroyed, so this remains conjectural.[104]

Other representations of men in Median dress with the baresman, from

[100] See above, pp. 117-8.

[101] For references see M. Boyce and F. Kotwal, 'Zoroastrian *bāj* and *drōn* II', BSOAS XXXIV, 1971, 299-302.

[102] See HZ I 158-9.

[103] See E. Akurgal, Die Kunst Anatoliens von Homer bis Alexander, Berlin 1961, 173-4 with Pl. 120.

[104] Akurgal, loc. cit.

the Achaemenian period, are to be found on gold plaques from the Oxus Treasure.[105] The finest of these shows a man in tunic and trousers but without the kandys. He has the side-flaps of the tiara tied over his chin, leaving nose and mouth free. His left hand hangs empty, but in his right he holds an impressively long baresman, and at his side he wears the characteristic Iranian short sword.[106] Whether priests carried swords on occasion, or whether this should be taken as evidence that the figure is in fact that of a nobleman, there is not enough parallel evidence to determine. Another plaque shows a man similarly clad, with sword and no kandys, who holds the baresman in his left hand and in his right a beaker with cover and handle. He has the tiara-flaps tied over nose and mouth, as does a man on another plaque who wears the kandys, and has the baresman in his right hand and a globular vase held high in his left.[107] It is suggested that the gold plaques which bear these figures were perhaps votive offerings, in which case noblemen might have chosen to have themselves represented on them in devotional manner; but whether in fact these were, individually, 'warriors' or priests it seems impossible in the absence of inscriptions to establish.

To return to seal no. 20 at Persepolis, this bears a Persian name in Aramaic letters: Datam[a]; but this is unfortunately insufficient for an identification of its owner.[108] There are other seals at Persepolis which yield a few more proper names; but perhaps the chief interest of these objects for the history of Zoroastrianism is that together they show that by the time of Darius fire on a raised stand, flanked by attendants or worshippers, had become an established religious symbol.

The pestles and mortars from the treasury

The mortar shown on seal no. 20 is, as its excavator pointed out, almost identical in shape with a bronze mortar from the treasury, and also 'with mortars of green chert with Aramaic inscriptions in ink which occurred in great numbers in that building'; and from this he was led to deduce that 'these mortars, as well as some bronze pestles and inscribed chert pestles (the latter found in equally puzzling quantities) had an important function in the altar ritual'.[109] Accordingly the Aramaic inscriptions on these chert objects (which are probably to be dated from the seventh year of Xerxes to the twenty-ninth year of Artaxerxes I,

[105] On the Treasure as a whole see below, p. 276 ff.
[106] See Dalton, Treasure of the Oxus, 19-20 no. 48, with Pl. XIV.
[107] Ibid,. 22 nos. 69, 70 with Pl. XV.
[108] See Schmidt, Persepolis II, 26 n. 122.
[109] Schmidt, ibid., 9.

that is 478-435) were first edited as ritual texts.[110] Further study established, however, that they were in fact simply administrative dockets, recording when and from where and whom the objects had been received.[111] As well as the pestles and mortars, there were platters of green chert, like them finely worked; and all these objects appear to have been delivered to the treasury, perhaps in sets of three, twice or thrice a year for over forty years. They were sent, apparently, from distant Arachosia, where this hard, almost flint-like stone is found; and the dockets show that high officials were regularly concerned in the matter. All this would seem to point to a nobler destination for these utensils than pharmacy or kitchen; but in fact they appear not to have been used at all, for if they had been the ink dockets, written directly on the stone, would have been rubbed or washed away. Apparently pestles, mortars and platters were simply received and stored on treasury shelves, perhaps as something like a quit-rent exacted on a whim by Xerxes, and continued until his son put an end to the custom. The mortars themselves vary in size—according to the dockets, between large, medium and small—and frequently have a convex base, perhaps 'to facilitate rocking or revolving',[112] but certainly not helpful for steady pounding, and not a feature of mortars used in Zoroastrian rituals. It does not seem, therefore, that these pleasing but puzzling objects can shed any light on Achaemenian religious practices, although the inscriptions on them have provided some of the theophoric names already considered in this chapter.

[110] See Bowman, RT.
[111] See W. Hinz, 'Zu den Mörsern und Stösseln aus Persepolis', Mon. Nyberg I, Acta Iranica 1975, 371-85, with a bibliography of earlier articles by B. A. Levine, P. Bernard, J. Naveh and S. Shaked, M. N. Bogoliubov, I. Gershevitch, J. A. Delaunay, and R. Degen. The remarks in HZ I 159 are to be corrected accordingly.
[112] Bowman, op. cit., 46.

CHAPTER NINE

CONTACTS AND INFLUENCES IN IONIA IN THE MEDIAN AND EARLY ACHAEMENIAN PERIODS

The god of Time

Under the Saite dynasty, overthrown just before Cambyses' conquest, there was a revival of Egypt's ancient civilization; and this coincided with a time of prosperity for the mainland and Ionian Greeks, who traded extensively throughout the eastern Mediterranean. During the first millennium B.C. a commercial network of Greek cities developed, and the remains of Greek settlements, established in the late seventh century, have been found along the Syrian and Palestinian coasts. There was also a continual migration of Greeks to serve as mercenaries in Near Eastern lands, including Egypt and Babylonia. On a smaller scale there was movement also of Asiatics into Ionian cities; and to judge from their fathers' names several famous Ionian thinkers of the sixth century were of 'barbarian' stock. Thus Byas of Pryene, one of the Seven Sages, had an Asiatic (probably Phrygian) father; Thales of Miletus was of Phoenician ancestry; and the father of Pherecydes of Syros appears to have come from southern Anatolia.[1]

This then was a period at which cultural interchanges were to be expected; and it is of considerable interest that it is in the work of Pherecydes—whose floruit is put around 544 B.C.—that the first literary presentation of a primordial divinity of Time is to be found. Pherecydes, a syncretist and 'theologian', was said to have had no teacher, but to have used the 'revelation of Ham' and the 'secret works of the Phoenicians'.[2] According to his cosmogony,[3] there were three divine beings who had always existed: Chronos or Time, Zas, 'He who liveth' (his name for the highest god), and Chthonie, 'She who is beneath the earth'. Zas gave Chthonie earth as a robe of honour, and wedded her as Gē; but Chronos, remaining alone without consort, produced from his own seed fire, wind and water. He was opposed by Ophioneus 'the Snaky One', who had been 'born' (of unknown parents), and who with his armies fought Chronos for possession of heaven. Ophioneus was de-

[1] See M. L. West, Early Greek Philosophy and the Orient, 3, 213-4.
[2] Ibid., 3.
[3] See ibid., 9 ff.

feated and thrust down into the ocean; and thereafter Chronos reigned supreme, and 'wore a crown like a victorious athlete'.[4] Pherecydes was further remembered 'as the first author who taught that the human soul ... passed from body to body';[5] but his beliefs concerning the hereafter and the ultimate fate of souls remain obscure.

Babylonian elements have been seen in his teaching about the serpent-god who now inhabits the ocean, and who, though he once fought with Chronos, is not a principle of evil, nor any longer an active force;[6] but the doctrine of the widest interest and significance in Pherecydes' system is undoubtedly that concerning Chronos himself, 'the god Time who always existed, who began everything by generating progeny from his own seed, and who remains powerful in the world of the present day. Here ... is something entirely without precedents in earlier Greek accounts of the origins of things'.[7] Indeed the divinization of an abstract concept of Time is remarkable anywhere in the general religious history of the world.[8]

A possible remote origin for such a concept has been traced in Egyptian beliefs concerning the sun-god Rē, who in the Book of the Dead, for example, is made to declare: 'I am the oldest of the Primeval Ones, my soul is the soul of the eternal gods; my embodiment is Eternity, my form is Everlasting, the lord of years, the ruler of eternity'.[9] Rē was moreover said to have created other gods by an act of self-directed fellatio.[10] We have seen how his symbol of the winged disk made its way throughout the Near East in the second millennium B.C.;[11] and some of the myths and beliefs concerning the Egyptian sun-god may have travelled with it. The 'Sun of Eternity', Shamash ʿōlām, appears in a Phoenician inscription of the ninth or eighth century;[12] and centuries later Eudemus of Rhodes 'reported of the chronology of the Sidonians that they put Chronos, Pothos and Omichle at the beginning of things'.[13]

[4] Ibid., 23.
[5] Ibid., 25. W. Jaeger, The theology of the early Greek philosophers, 84, was evidently right in saying that 'the problem of how and where the doctrine of metempsychosis arose [is] insoluble because nearly all the relevant traditional material has been lost'.
[6] West, op. cit., 40.
[7] Ibid., 28. Cf. Duchesne-Guillemin, Western Response, 79.
[8] This fact in itself created doubt about Nyberg's theory (Rel. 104-5, 280-9) that Zurvan, 'Time', was a primitive god of the western Iranians. This theory was, however, adopted by Widengren and by Wikander (who made Zurvan the mythological father of the Indo-Iranian Vayu). It was also followed by Zaehner in his Zurvan, but abandoned by him in his subsequent book, Dawn and Twilight.
[9] See West, op. cit., 35-6 with references.
[10] See ibid.
[11] Above, pp. 37-8, 96.
[12] See West, op. cit., 36.
[13] Ibid., 48.

According to another Sidonian account, from the work of one Mochos, 'the first two principles were Aither and Aer, and from them arose Ulōmos ... He united with himself, and produced the divine craftsman Chusōros and an egg for him to open; when broken it formed the heaven and the earth'.[14]

So there existed, it would seem, in the Phoenician region, perhaps in the seventh or sixth century B.C., a myth about a god of Time which was possibly a local development from one aspect of Egyptian sun-worship, whereby time, controlled by the movement of the sun, came to be worshipped as a distinct divinity, a cosmic progenitor; and this myth, seemingly, became one of the sources of Pherecydes' inspiration. It was possibly also from Phoenicia, and in the same way (that is, through trade and travel) that this myth reached India, there also to bear fruit. For in the Atharvaveda Kāla 'Time' is said to have generated the sky and the earth and also Prajāpati, who fulfils the further role of creator.[15] Earlier, in the Rigveda, Prajāpati is not the offspring of Time but appears as the 'golden embryo' who, once born, generates and upholds earth, sea and sky;[16] and it is suggested that it was under alien influences that he came to be assimilated into a Time-cosmogony.[17] This development too seems attributable to the first millennium B.C.; and so there appear then in three separate areas—Phoenicia, Ionia and India—beliefs concerning a god of Time who was an original and originating Being, all of which beliefs, although essentially harmonious, are combined locally with three quite different traditions:[18] ʿUlōm with the old Semitic wind and water cosmogony, Chronos with Zas (that is, in effect, Zeus) and Chthonie, Kāla with Prajāpati. The likelihood seems that of these three systems the Phoenician is the oldest and the common source for the other two; and it further appears probable that through Pherecydes this belief in the god Time influenced the Orphics, and, becoming widely known, contributed largely, probably in the fifth century B.C., to the development of the Zoroastrian heresy of Zurvanism.[19]

[14] Ibid., 29 (where further material is cited to establish the authenticity of this account).

[15] See AV 19.53/4 (cited in the Whitney-Lanman translation by West, op. cit., 33); and cf. Keith, Religion and Philosophy, 209, 444.

[16] RV 10.121.

[17] West, 34. Otherwise Widengren, Religionen, 221; cf. Gnoli, Homeland, 211 ff. See previously Scheftelowitz, Die Zeit als Schicksalsgottheit in der indischen und iranischen Religion, Stuttgart 1929. Duchesne-Guillemin, Rel., 187-8 (132), sought a direct link between Prajāpati and the Iranian Zurvan.

[18] See West, op. cit., 34-5.

[19] The weight of evidence and probability for Zurvanism having developed in the mid Achaemenian period seems to the present writer too strong for it to be possible to accept the ingenious but fragile hypotheses that *Turma/Turme and *iz-ru-du-uk-ma* of the Elamite tablets contain forms of a divine name *Durvan/Zurvan (see above, pp. 140, 143).

Zoroastrianism and early Ionian philosophy

a) *The philosophers of Miletus*

In the difficult field of cultural contacts it is clearly necessary to look both for the means and causes for influence to have been felt in particular times and places. In general Zoroastrianism appears to have exerted rather than received influences, since Zoroaster's doctrines, with their originality and coherence, acted as a powerful new stimulus on established beliefs and thought. In Ionia the first centre for contact with them appears to have been Miletus, near the mouth of the Meander. Its fine harbours enabled this city to achieve commercial power and wealth, and it was a great founder of mercantile settlements, as well as being the earliest home of Greek philosophy. The rise of this philosophy there has generally been attributed in the past to the stimulus of contact, through trade and travel, with Egyptian and Babylonian thought; but more heed has been given of late to the likelihood of Iranian influence, exerted possibly already in the pre-Achaemenian period. Such influence is the more probable in that the early Milesian philosophers are linked together by their interest in cosmology and cosmogony; and these were fields of thought which deeply concerned Iranian priests of both the old religion and of Zoroastrianism. Moreover, Iranian speculations on these matters were more abstract and systematic than those of the Babylonians and Egyptians, with an ancient postulate of a division of the physical world into seven distinct parts, created in orderly succession.[20]

i) *Thales*

Miletus managed in general to remain on friendly terms with neighbouring Lydia, which after the overthrow of the Assyrian Empire in the last decade of the seventh century asserted its power and established dominance over a number of the other Ionian cities. Eventually the Lydians became embroiled in their five-year war with the Medes; and Thales, the earliest of the Milesian philosophers, is mentioned by Herodotus as flourishing at the time when peace was made, in 585.[21] Ionian soldiers had fought in the Lydian army; and during the years of warfare prisoners must have been taken on both sides, and heralds have passed to and fro. Thereafter a common boundary was established between the Medes and Lydians, with all the natural opportunities which that gave

[20] See HZ I 130 ff. In seeking to minimize the contribution of Oriental to Ionian thought C. J. Emlyn-Jones, The Ionians and Hellenism, London 1980, 162-3, appears considerably to underestimate the clarity and analytical force of ancient Iranian cosmological speculation.

[21] I.74.

for commerce and other exchanges. Thales himself lived long, and Herodotus presents him as being with Croesus when that Lydian king fought against Cyrus in 546, and as surviving the Persian conquest.[22] There is no difficulty therefore in supposing that the philosopher, with his evident eagerness for knowledge of diverse kinds, found opportunities to meet and converse with Iranian magi (who under the Deiocids might have been either Zoroastrians or priests of the old religion), and that what he learnt of their cosmogonic doctrines stimulated him to new thoughts of his own about the nature of the world.[23]

Nothing survives of Thales' own works; but according to Aristotle his cosmology contained the following principles: that the earth floats on water; that water is the material cause of all things; and that all things are full of gods.[24] The first of these principles, it has been pointed out,[25] accords with the Zoroastrian doctrine that the 'creation' of earth rests like a great disk upon the 'creation' of water. The idea of earth resting on water was not peculiar to the Iranians; but they added to this concept a profound veneration for water, so much so that this was later to be more remarked upon by Herodotus than their respect for fire.[26] They conceived of water as the first of the six creations which occupy the hard shell of the enclosing 'sky'; and they thought of it as having 'a vital force which needs to be constantly restored by libations consisting of liquids taken from plants and animals, that is, the latter liquids also contain the same vital force'.[27] Discussions with Iranian priests might very well, therefore, have led Thales to evolve his own second principle (although presumably in a somewhat different formulation from that ascribed to him by Aristotle, writing from the point of view of his own developed theory of causation). The further belief attributed to Thales that 'all things are full of gods' conceivably reflects the Zoroastrian teaching that the great Ameša Spentas are both transcendent and yet also immanent in their 'creations'. Such a possibility increases the likelihood that it would have been Zoroastrian rather than pagan Iranian priests with whom Thales spoke of such things.

ii) *Anaximander*

The possibility that Zoroastrian magi had established links with Miletus already under the Deiocids is strengthened, as we have already

[22] I.75, 170.
[23] See M. F. Lowe (of the Van Leer Foundation, Jerusalem), 'Putative Persian sources for the beginnings of Greek philosophy', (in preparation).
[24] For references see J. Burnet, Early Greek Philosophy, 4th ed., London 1930, 47-8.
[25] Lowe, art. cit.
[26] See the next chapter.
[27] Lowe, art. cit. (based on HZ I 155-6).

seen,[28] by the scraps of evidence which suggest that propagandists for Cyrus were active in the region before the overthrow of Media. So when the Persian king eventually invaded Ionia, he was able to secure a favourable oracle from the priests of the Apollo-shrine on the Meander, even as he was able to secure favourable predictions from Second Isaiah and the Babylonian priests of Marduk. Further, the city of Miletus entered into friendly relations with him, and alone of the Ionian cities 'struck no blow' in the ensuing campaigns.[29] It seems probable, therefore, that around 550 there were Zoroastrian magi living in Miletus, exiled, perhaps, by the still pagan Deiocids, as others, most likely Persians, were living then in Babylon, talking persuasively both of their faith and of its coming champion, Cyrus; and it further seems probable that at least one such priest, learned in the doctrines of his faith, had long discussions with Anaximander, the second of the Milesian philosophers, who flourished then—just as some unknown Persian magus must have held long conferences with Second Isaiah.

The Milesian philosophers formed no school, apart from their common preoccupation with cosmology; and Anaximander had a very different concept of the origin of the world from Thales, seeing it as deriving from what he called the 'Boundless', *apeiron*.[30] Aristotle, summarizing his deductions concerning the chief properties of this 'Boundless', wrote: 'As a beginning, it must also be something that has not become and cannot pass away. For that which has become must necessarily come to an end, and all passing away likewise has an end. Thus, as we have said, it is itself without beginning, but is rather—so it is thought—the beginning of everything else. And it encompasses all things and governs all things ... And this ... is the Divine. For it is immortal and indestructible'.[31]

This concept of the 'Boundless', identified as the 'Divine' was, it has been said, 'of epoch-making importance in Greek philosophy'.[32] As far as the surviving material reaches, 'the concept of the Divine as such does not appear before Anaximander ... When he says that the Bound-

[28] See above, pp. 47-8.
[29] Herodotus I.169, cf. 141.
[30] See West, op. cit., 24. For a general treatment of Anaximander's philosophy, with its debt to Iran, see W. Burkert, 'Iranisches bei Anaximandres', Rheinisches Museum 106, 1963, 97-134; West, op. cit., 76 ff. Earlier Jaeger, op. cit. in n. 5, 23 ff., treated his system as developing from purely Greek antecedents, although in itself 'providing a new and profoundly disturbing experience' (ibid., p. 49). Better understanding of Zoroaster's own teachings, and the reassessment of his date, have together strengthened the arguments put forward by Burkert, West and others for Iranian influences.
[31] Aristotle, Phys. iii 4, 203b 6 (Anaximander 15); see Jaeger, op. cit., 25 with nn. 16 and 17, 29-30.
[32] Jaeger, op. cit., 31.

less "encompasses all things and governs all things", he is satisfying the loftiest demands which religious thought has required of divinity ... Rational thought has arrived at the idea of something immortal and divine by seeking an origin for all things which shall itself be without origin'.[33] This constituted, moreover, a radical break with Greek ideas as embodied in the theogony of Hesiod, for whom 'generation was the one real form of becoming', and who 'constructed a genealogy of all the gods, and held that everything, even Chaos, came into being'.[34] It is striking, however, that Anaximander should have made these innovations in thought at the very time when Zoroastrian priests can be held to have been present and active in Ionia, talking there of their own religious beliefs, which included faith in the one uncreated God who dwells in Boundless Light (Anagra Raočā),[35] above this world which he in his wisdom has brought into being, according to his own divine plan.

Anaximander may be supposed to have reacted to the impact of such beliefs by assimilating them to his own Greek traditions, evolving in the process a world-picture which has little immediate resemblance to the Zoroastrian one. Thus he taught that from the Boundless other worlds have come into being as well as ours, equidistant from one another, and deducible by reason though beyond the reach of observation. The germ of such an idea might conceivably lie in the Iranian concept of the six 'karšvars' which encircle our earth;[36] although Anaximander blends his theory curiously, it seems, with Zoroastrian doctrine about the emanation of lesser divine beings from Ahuramazda by calling these worlds 'gods' arising from the Boundless—'a kind of philosophical theogony' in which 'innumerable god-worlds issue from this same divine substance'.[37] He held, further, that each world is encased in a shell of fire. Within the fiery shell of our own earth he placed the stars nearest the earth, then the moon, then the sun, and is almost the only Greek thinker known to have done so. This is the order in which the heavenly bodies were set by the Iranian priestly scholars, who evidently evolved this system in a remote past, not through deduction but through 'a religious conception of fiery purity as one ascends from earth to heaven. From this point of view the smallness and relative faintness of the stars is a reason for placing them nearest the earth instead of fur-

[33] Ibid., 31-2.
[34] Ibid., 12, 32.
[35] See HZ I 141. That the concept of Boundless Light influenced Anaximander's idea of the Boundless was suggested by Burkert, op. cit., 126; see West, op. cit., 90.
[36] See HZ I 134.
[37] Jaeger, op. cit., 33.

thest from it'.[38] Anaximander's cosmology is in several respects more sophisticated than the ancient Iranian one; and hence it is the Iranian teaching, with its eschatological inspiration, which must be regarded as primary. 'Coincidence is excluded. Anaximander's conceptions cannot be derived from Greek antecedents, and to suppose that they chanced to burgeon in his mind without antecedents, at the very moment when the Persians were knocking at Ionian doors, would be as preposterous as it is pointless ... At the same time Anaximander inherited an established Greek tradition of materialistic meteorology. The further he goes outside our earth, the more his explanations become theological and non-Greek in inspiration; the nearer he is to earth, the more they are physical and follow native lines of thought'.[39]

The one fragment of Anaximander's teachings which survives in his own words consists of a single sentence: 'But from whatever things is the genesis of the things that are, into these they must pass away according to necessity; for they must pay the penalty and make atonement to one another for their injustice according to time's decree'.[40] It is suggested that the philosopher is here using the image of a law-court 'as an explanation of the coming-to-be and passing-away of things in the natural world, he is obviously thinking of their very existence as dependent on a state of having-too-much, for which they must make amends by ceding to others the thing they now enjoy'.[41] Such an image, it is said, fitted well with a period in Greek history when 'the idea of justice was being made the basis upon which state and society were to be built'.[42] It also harmonizes with the Zoroastrian concept of *aša/arta*, and with the recurrent use of legal terminology in the Gathas. It must have been because there were a number of harmonious elements between Zoroaster's teachings and early Ionian thought—notably the prophet's radical monotheism and the Greek tendency then towards monism, and the concern of both with cosmogony and cosmology—that the Iranian religion was able, it seems, to exert a transforming influence on Anaximander's ideas.

iii) *Anaximenes*

When a generation later Anaximander's fellow-citizen, Anaximenes, composed his philosophical work Miletus stood, a free city still, within

[38] See Burkert, op. cit., 110; West, op. cit., 90. On the concept of the sun drawing up the souls of the departed see HZ I 113-4.
[39] West, op. cit., 96-7.
[40] Simplicius, Phys., 24, 13 f. (Anaximander, A 9), see Jaeger, op. cit., 34 with n. 53.
[41] Jaeger, op. cit., 35.
[42] Ibid.

a Persian satrapy; but though Persian influences must have been felt over the whole area, Anaximenes himself appears to owe less than his predecessor to Iranian ideas, though not remaining wholly unaffected by them.[43] According to his cosmology, the first principle is 'Aer' (approximately our air, but sometimes thought of as mist or vapour or the wind). From it was created the earth, flat and broad like a table, supported on air; and the vapours given off from earth became rarified and converted into fire, thus forming the sun, moon and stars, which (he taught) are thin and light, and ride the air like leaves. These floating luminaries did not, he held, pass from sight underneath the earth (as was usually thought by Greeks), but disappeared behind a great mountain to the north. That such a mountain existed was part of native Greek tradition; but that its peak caused night and day accords, not which this tradition, but with Iranian ideas about 'high Harā'.[44]

More profoundly, Anaximenes too wrestled with the idea of the cosmos as something coherent and purposeful, 'for he maintains that air controls the cosmos and holds it together in the same way that the psyche controls our bodies. In thus animizing the *apeiron* of Anaximander, Anaximenes is obviously thinking of mental and not merely physiological phenomena. He clearly feels that the divine nature of the *apeiron* should include the power of thought, as indispensable for governing the All'.[45] It is possible here to think of Zoroastrian veneration for the Lord Wisdom, especially since Anaximenes holds that the gods emerge from the Air as their primordial element,[46] a concept perhaps again inspired by the doctrine that all the lesser yazatas have their being from Ahuramazda.

b) *Heraclitus of Ephesus*

A generation later, in the writings of Heraclitus of Ephesus, composed about 500 B.C., Persian influences appear even more strongly.[47] Heraclitus taught that that this world 'is a fire, never extinguished, though not all parts of it are alight at once: "kindling in measures and going out in measures". The parts that are not alight exist as other things, which appear "in exchange" for fire, as goods for gold'.[48] The Zoroastrian doctrine was that fire permeated all the other six creations, giving

[43] See West, op. cit., 99.
[44] See ibid., 105-6; HZ I 135.
[45] Jaeger, op. cit., 36.
[46] See ibid., 36-7.
[47] The question of these influences has been discussed for nearly two hundred years, and has latterly been investigated afresh by West, op. cit., 165-202, q.v. for a bibliography of earlier studies by both classicists and Iranists.
[48] West, op. cit., 129.

them warmth and life.[49] The two conceptions are admittedly far from being the same. Earth for Heraclitus 'has not got fire in it, it is fire that has gone out and so changed its substance. Yet the difference conceals a similarity. The parts of the world that are not fire nevertheless retain the vital forward flow of fire. Fire makes a link between apparently widely separated cosmic districts: this is the essential thought that Heraclitus had to think before he could make use of fire in his cosmology ... The question is how he came to think it. From some histories of philosophy one would suppose that he was more or less bound to. Thales had based his cosmology on water, Anaximenes on air, and so it was only natural that Heraclitus should turn to fire! But that pre-supposes an explicit assumption common to Ionian thinkers, "everything must be reducible to one of the (Empedoclean) elements, but it is less certain which"'.[50] The greater likehood, it is suggested, is that 'Heraclitus would not naturally have turned to fire without some particular stimulus. Such a stimulus could have been given by observation of the extraordinary status accorded by the Persians to fire'.[51]

Further, Heraclitus held that the regularity of the sun's movements 'is supervised by Dike, who must be imagined as exercising a general control over the measures of the world-fire. She will also in some way overtake artificers and witnesses of falsehood'.[52] Anaximander had had the concept of cosmic justice, but not that of a cosmic deity of justice, a concept which powerfully recalls Zoroastrian teaching about Aša. A fairly close parallel is found in the work of Heraclitus' contemporary, Parmenides of Elea, whereas there is no analogy in earlier Greek literature.[53]

Heraclitus taught, moreover, that God was Wisdom—'a Wisdom that does and does not want to be called by the name of Zeus alone', that is, which had Zeus' nobler traditional characteristics, but not the baser ones.[54] 'The Wise is one, and it knows that knowledge which steers everything through the world'.[55] 'The Wise watches men ceaselessly, by day and night; and this emphasis on the unremitting watchfulness over men by the divine power is something new in Greece'.[56] The parallels

[49] See HZ I 140-1.
[50] West, op. cit., 172-3.
[51] Ibid., 173.
[52] Ibid., 176-7.
[53] Ibid., 179. An Ionian tradition, it is suggested, may have been brought in the previous generation to Elea by its Phocaean founders, see ibid., 226.
[54] Ibid., 180, cf. 139-40; Jaeger, op. cit., 125.
[55] West, op. cit., 141.
[56] Ibid., 180.

here with the doctrine of Ahuramazda, the Lord Wisdom, are too striking to need emphasis.

Heraclitus held that at death the body, becoming an abomination, was not fit to be burnt or buried, but was 'more to be cast out than dung'; and so was to be made an object for scavenging beasts and birds[57]— a treatment wholly repulsive to the ordinary Greek, but required observance among Zoroastrians. Superior souls, he appears to have taught, rise up at death to the pure region of the sun and stars and survive there indefinitely;[58] the more sensual souls cluster around the moon, dimming its fire, and from there become wind and rain, and so perish. Their gathering is confined by Dike to the night and winter. At the highest level are immortal hero-spirits which 'stand up' from the dead and keep watch over the living and dead.[59] These hero-spirits have been compared with the fravašis of Zoroastrianism; and it is suggested that the odd, unGreek expression of 'standing up' may have been influenced by the Zoroastrian conception of a final resurrection.[60]

Heraclitus terms the wise soul 'dry', and links it with Zeus as 'the Wise'; whereas the inferior soul is 'sodden', and when it turns to water, and thus perishes, he sees in this the agency of Hades, the traditional god of death.[61] It is not suggested that 'Heraclitus presented the antithesis between Zeus and Hades as a grand cosmic war. Yet ... his conviction that opposition is the essence of the universe as we know it has long seemed to comparativists a counterpart of the Zoroastrian doctrine of agelong war between Ahura Mazdā and Angra Mainyu'[62] —a war which was waged, according to the Iranian prophet, not only on the moral plane but through all physical phenomena.

In matters of daily religious observance Heraclitus ridiculed men who prayed to statues, with a vigour equal to that of Second Isaiah.[63] Other Greeks of his time joined in this rejection, this being 'just another of the ideas current in Ionia at that period which magically agree with those of the Persians'.[64] 'With his intolerant attacks on established religious usages, his threats of future punishment for all contrivers of falsehood, his warnings against drunkenness and hubris, Heraclitus

[57] Ibid., 150-1, 183.
[58] For a broad comparison cf. the Pahlavi text AVN Ch. VII-IX.
[59] See West, op. cit., 188.
[60] Ibid., 188, 192.
[61] Ibid., 158, 188.
[62] Ibid., 189.
[63] The rejection of images must have been one of the factors which had created a strong bond of sympathy between Zoroastrian magus and Jewish prophet.
[64] West, op. cit., 192.

strikes a prophetic note that has reminded more than one reader of Zoroaster ... Without the extensive parallels of doctrine this would remain a generality. With them it becomes a significant point'.[65]

The potency of Zoroastrian influence on Ionian thought, beginning, it would seem, with Thales, may be gauged by Heraclitus' works; but this influence did not continue far into the fifth century. 'Greek thought turns in on itself and digests what it has taken in. One obvious cause is the Persian War and its aftermath ... There was another factor, however, which may have been the most important of all: the growing self-sufficiency of Greek rationalism. Observation of the natural world increasingly prompted the (sometimes premature) formulation of general principles which offered more appealing solutions to the problems of cosmology than the non-empirical postulates that foreign thought had to offer'.[66] Nevertheless, the invasion of Greek speculation by Persian beliefs in the period from about 550 to 480 produced, it has been pointed out, 'a permanent enlargement where it touched', freeing the Greeks from the limitations of interpreting only man's immediate environment, and leading them to think 'of an infinity beyond the visible sky and below the foundations of the earth, of a life not bounded by womb and tomb ... It was now that they learned to think that good men and bad have different destinations after death, that the fortunate soul ascends to the luminaries of heaven; that God is intelligence ... that the material world can be analysed in terms of a few basic constituents ... that there is a world of Being beyond perception, beyond time. These were conceptions of enduring importance for ancient philosophy. This was the gift of the Magi'.[67] The fructifying power of the Zoroastrian concepts is suggested by the fact that in the fifth century the Greeks of the mainland were 'apparently more than a century behind the times in comparison with the enlightened cosmological thought of the Ionians'.[68] It was 'the edge of Asia'—that is, the westernmost provinces of the Achaemenian Empire—which was the birthplace of Greek philosophy.[69]

Zoroastrianism and Orphism

Orphism, it appears, was not so much a coherent religion as a name for the practice, adopted in diverse Graeco-Oriental cults, of giving a

[65] Ibid., 193. In the pages that follow West traces comparisons in 'miscellaneous details of thought and expression' between Heraclitus' words and Zoroastrian texts.
[66] Ibid., 226-7.
[67] Ibid., 241-2.
[68] Jaeger, op. cit., 128.
[69] See ibid., 55.

place of honour to poems ascribed to the 'ancient Orpheus'.[70] This practice, it seems, began in the latter part of the sixth century B.C. with Pythagoras,[71] who in 531 left Samos for southern Italy, disliking apparently the rule of the island's tyrant, Polycrates. The earliest mention of Orpheus' name in extant Greek verses is by the poet Ibycus, who moved to Samos from Southern Italy during Polycrates' reign; and thereafter some part in giving currency to Orphism is assigned to Onomacritos, an Athenian who was banished from his native city by the Peisistratid Hipparchus (d. 514), and who probably spent many years of exile in Ionia, travelling widely there.[72] Aristotle is cited as stating that though certain hymns contained the opinions of Orpheus, 'it is said that Onomacritos spun them out in verse'.[73] After almost thirty years Onomacritos was reconciled to the Peisistratids, themselves then exiled, and was sent on a mission to the Achaemenian court at Susa, which suggests that he had acquired in Ionia a knowledge of the language of the ruling Persians. Undoubtedly both there and at Susa he could have conversed with magi; and he has been seen as a possible intermediary for certain Zoroastrian ideas (notably salvation-beliefs and cosmogonic doctrines) entering early Orphic literature.[74] Zoroastrian influence continued naturally throughout the Achaemenian period, as did the composition of Orphic poems; and the character of the sources, and the syncretic nature of Orphism, with Egyptian beliefs mingling with Phoenician, Phrygian, Greek and Iranian, makes the subject as a whole immensely complex.

Conclusion

Zoroastrian influence, especially in the spheres of cosmogony and salvation-beliefs, appears to have been exerted on a variety of philosophies and religious movements in Ionia during the Median and early Achaemenian periods, while subsequently, through the Zurvanite heresy, the Iranian faith became itself a borrower of alien concepts. The Achaemenian epoch was one when the vast spread of the Persian empire encouraged an unusually vigorous interplay of cultures; but although many sets of ideas—Egyptian, Babylonian, Phoenician, Greek, Anatolian and Indian—seem to have circulated widely then in the Near East, there is much to be said for the view that Zoroastrianism, endowed as it was with doctrinal strength and profound originality, and backed by the prestige of imperial power, 'came in like a spring tide',[75] and helped to change the world-outlook of many peoples.

[70] See M. L. West, 'Graeco-Oriental Orphism in the third century B.C.', Travaux du VI° Congrès International d'Etudes Classiques, Madrid 1974, 221-6.
[71] Ibid., 221.
[72] See R. Böhme, Orpheus, der Sänger und seine Zeit, 72-3.
[73] On Philosophy frg. 7R, see W. K. C. Guthrie, Orpheus and Greek religion, 12.
[74] See, e.g., F. Legge, Forerunners and Rivals of Christianity, I 126 n. 3; and cf. F. M. Cornford, From Religion to Philosophy, Cambridge 1912, 176.

[75] L. H. Mills, Zarathustra, Philo, the Achaemenids and Israel, Leipzig 1905-1906, 438.

CHAPTER TEN

XERXES (486-465 B.C.)

In 490 a force sent by Darius to subdue Eritrea and Athens met at Marathon the only defeat recorded for his armies. Three years later Egypt rose in revolt; and before either matter could be pursued, the Great King died, in 486. He was succeeded by Xerxes (Khšayāršan), the eldest of four sons born to him by Atossa, who for ten years had been satrap of Babylonia. Xerxes marched first against the Egyptian rebels. 'These he subdued, and laid Egypt under a much harder slavery than in the time of Darius'.[1] He never returned in person to that land, and no monuments or inscriptions of interest survive there in his name.[2] Babylonia then rose in its turn, probably in 482, and this rebellion too Xerxes put down harshly, seeking, it seems, to extinguish all hopes of a restoration of the ancient kingdom.[3] The great temple of Esagila was demolished, its high priest killed, and Marduk's image, the focal point of royal and priestly rites, destroyed.

These courses of action pursued by Xerxes have been seen as marking the end of the first phase of Achaemenian rule, when the Great Kings sought to ensure the continuity of their empire by appearing in the conquered lands of the 'anarya' as successors to the former native dynasts, and hence as benefactors of the local religions and their institutions. It is by no means the case that gifts by the Achaemenian kings to 'anarya' temples ceased with Xerxes; but it seems that he, as son and heir to Darius, felt secure in his title to rule, and was not conscious of a need to conciliate those whom he regarded as his lawful subjects, if they chose to rise in revolt against him.

In 481 Xerxes turned to fulfil his father's aim of subduing the European Greeks. This act was to make him one of the best known Achaemenian kings, because of Herodotus' account of the war. The Greek historian, born a Persian subject at Halicarnassus (modern Budrum) in Asia Minor, was only a child at the time; but he is thought to have acquired much of his information from Persians and Greeks who themselves took part in the campaigns. There were Greeks in Xerxes' armies;

[1] Herodotus VII.7.
[2] See Posener, La première domination perse en Égypte, 191; Kienitz, Politische Geschichte Ägyptens, 67-8.
[3] See G. G. Cameron, 'Darius and Xerxes in Babylonia', AJSL 58, 1941, 314-25.

and among those who travelled to Susa to urge the Persian king to embark on the war were ambassadors from the exiled Athenian Peisistratids, among them the Orphic Onomacritos.[4]

Religious observances in Herodotus' account of the Greek war

In his account of the Greek war[5] Herodotus mentions a number of religious observances carried out in both armies, some incidental, others in direct furtherance of their military aims. The Greeks, lacking a professional priesthood, relied on lay seers and diviners, and on oracles sought from their great shrines. The Persian armies were accompanied by magi, indeed magi appear in Herodotus' account even before the campaign had begun, since he describes magi interpreting a dream to Xerxes with regard to the success of the war.[6]

Otherwise he has nothing to relate of a religious nature before the Persian army reached his own homeland of Asia Minor. Then, he says, marching through Lydia Xerxes 'found a plane-tree, to which for its beauty he gave adornment of gold, and charged one of his Immortals to guard it'.[7] Veneration of trees is attested in the common Indo-Iranian tradition,[8] and gained new significance in Zoroastrianism, since the Ameša Spenta Ameretāt is lord of all plants, and can be worshipped through them.[9] There is little doubt, therefore, that Herodotus' words signify that Xerxes created a shrine at the foot of this majestic tree; and a priest would probably have been left there with the soldier, to worship and to pray.

The ceremonial march of the Persian army out of Sardis, Lydia's ancient capital, is described by Herodotus in impressive detail. He tells how, after a great throng of mixed troops, there came a thousand picked Persian horsemen, then a thousand Persian spearmen, their spears reversed; 'and after them, ten horses of the breed called Nesaean, equipped with all splendour ... Behind these ten horses was the place of the sacred chariot of Zeus [i.e. Ahuramazda] drawn by eight white horses, the charioteer on foot following the horses and holding the reins; for no mortal man may mount into that seat'. Xerxes himself followed in his ceremonial chariot. Then came more Persian spearmen, 'carrying their spears in the customary manner, more picked Persian horsemen and Persian

[4] Herodotus VII.6; cf. above, p. 162.
[5] On which see in detail C. Hignett, Xerxes' Invasion of Greece.
[6] VII.19.
[7] VII.31.
[8] See HZ I 143, 176.
[9] See HZ I 205-6, and cf. above, p. 57.

foot soldiers, and finally the rest of the huge mixed host.[10] When Cyrus had marched into Babylon, over half a century earlier, he too had had sacred white horses with him;[11] and the ritual of the empty chariot which they drew may well go back even earlier.[12]

When in its onward march the Persian host reached Ilium, Xerxes viewed the ruins of Troy and 'sacrificed a thousand kine to Athene of Ilium, and the magi offered libations to the heroes',[13] honouring thus the spirits of brave men of another race. (Elsewhere Herodotus observes that 'the Persians are of all men known to me the most wont to honour valiant warriors'.[14]) Then at last the great army reached the headland of Abydos, where for months bridge-builders had been toiling to span the Hellespont. The first bridges had been swept away by storm, and Xerxes had had the unfortunate overseers beheaded. He also 'gave command that the Hellespont be scourged with three hundred lashes, and a pair of fetters be thrown into the sea'; and he ordered them to say as they scourged: 'Thou bitter water ... our master thus punishes thee, because thou didst him wrong albeit he had done thee none ... It is but just that no man offers thee sacrifices, for thou art a turbid and a briny river'.[15] However unworthy this act, it was performed according to the letter of evolved Zoroastrian doctrine, which is that salt water is sweet water tainted by the assault of the Hostile Spirit.[16] Herodotus earlier attributes a similar petulance to Cyrus, telling that when one of the sacred white horses was drowned in a Babylonian river, Cyrus was so angered that he had his army punish the stream by diverting its waters into one hundred and eighty canals; but a modern scholar has seen a more practical reason for this act by the earlier Persian king.[17]

When the bridges had been repaired, incense of all kinds was burnt along them, and myrtle boughs were strewn. Then as the sun rose 'Xerxes poured a libation from a golden phial into the sea, praying to the sun that no such accident should befall him as to stay him from subduing Europe ere he should reach its farthest borders. After the prayer, he cast the phial into the Hellespont, and a golden bowl withal, and a Persian sword'. 'As to these' (observes Herodotus) 'I cannot rightly

[10] VII.40, 41.
[11] Herodotus I.189.
[12] See p. 36, above.
[13] VII.43.
[14] VII.238.
[15] VII.35.
[16] See GBd. IV.27 (HZ I 232). Cf Clemen, Nachrichten, 80.
[17] I.189, on which see G. G. Cameron, 'Cyrus the "Father" and Babylonia', Comm. Cyrus I, Acta Iranica I, 1974, 45-8.

determine whether he cast them into the sea for offerings to the sun, or repented of his scourging of the Hellespont and gave gifts to the sea as atonement'.[18] The nature and manner of the offerings makes it also possible that Xerxes was invoking to his aid both the lesser Ahuras, Mithra lord of the sun and Varuna the Baga, Son of the Waters, seeking from them 'Ahura-created Victory'. Persian troops then crossed in the van of the army, 'all wearing garlands'; and on the second day, the safety of the bridges having been tested, the sacred white horses passed over with Ahuramazda's chariot, followed by the king himself.[19] (It took, Herodotus relates, five more days for the whole host to cross.)

Many days later, at the sweet waters of the Strymon in Macedonia, 'the magi slew white horses, offering thus sacrifice for good omens'.[20] The horse was linked with water-divinities, and so was appropriately sacrificed to them.[21] The army then crossed the river at a town called 'Nine Ways'; and learning its name, Herodotus says, 'they buried alive that number of boys and maidens, children of the people of the country'. 'To bury alive' (he reflects) 'is a Persian custom; I have heard that when Xerxes' wife Amestris attained to old age she buried fourteen sons of notable Persians, as a thank-offering on her own behalf to the fabled god of the nether world'.[22] Both these sacrifices appear also propitiatory in intention, made presumably to Yama, king of the dead (prominent among the Persepolis proper names) in order that he might be content with these choice young lives, and not hasten to add other souls to his ghostly subjects.[23] Such acts were clearly unZoroastrian in character, especially in the case of Amestris, who thus selfishly and wickedly brought untimely death on young Mazda-worshippers; and they can only be regarded as old pagan rites persisting and being practised thus at times of communal or individual stress.

The survival of such grim observances must have been helped by the fact that human sacrifice was still then known to other peoples with whom the Persians had contact. Thus later on this march the king's army entered the country of the Achaeans, who, 'desiring to inform him of all they knew', told Xerxes of human sacrifices offered in the worship

[18] VII.54.
[19] VII.55.
[20] VII.113.
[21] See HZ I 45 n. 151, 74.
[22] VII.114.
[23] See HZ I 83-4, 109-10 with n. 4. Contra Gnoli, Time and Homeland, 151 n. 164, who prefers an identification of the 'fabled god' with Anra Mainyu. But sacrificing to the Evil Spirit (who was almost certainly not recognized outside Zoroastrianism) could not have been traditional, and it is difficult to account for the act except as a pagan survival.

of Laphystian Zeus: 'and the guides showed Xerxes how the man is sacrificed, with fillets covering him all over and a procession to lead him forth'.[24] At the first sea-battle of the war the crew of a ship in the Persian fleet, having taken a Greek vessel, 'brought the goodliest of its fighting men and cut his throat on the ship's prow, so making a sacrifice of good augury of the first ... of their Greek captives'; [25] and this act had its counterpart in a Greek sacrifice before the battle of Salamis, when three young Persian nobles, 'of visage most beautiful to behold, conspicuously adorned with raiment and with gold ..., said to be the sons of Sandauce, the king's sister, and Artayctus', were offered up with prayers for victory to Dionysus Carnivorus.[26] Later, in the aftermath of the war, a Persian officer named Oibazos was captured by the Thracian Apsinthioi, who 'sacrificed him to Pleistorus, their tribal god, in their accustomed manner'.[27]

Before any of these incidents, while the Persian army had been marching through Thrace, Artachaees, an Achaemenian, 'the tallest man in Persia, ... and his voice was the loudest on earth', died of a sickness. 'Xerxes mourned him greatly and gave him a funeral and burial of great pomp, and the whole army poured libations on his tomb'. Herodotus gives no further details of the burial; but he tells how the local Greek people maintained thereafter a hero-cult at the tomb, 'by the bidding of an oracle', offering sacrifices and calling on Artachaees by name.[28]

The grief felt on this occasion by Xerxes for his kinsman had its counterpart, Herodotus relates, in the misery experienced by those who had to entertain the king and his vast army while they halted, being reduced thereby to poverty; but they thanked the gods that at least 'it was Xerxes' custom to take a meal only once a day'.[29] This meal was evidently a luxurious one; but the self-discipline implied accorded with Zoroastrian practice with regard to eating and drinking, which was always to do so ritually, with prayers said before and after out of respect for Haurvatāt and Ameretāt, the Ameša Spentas of water and plants. The prayers could

[24] VII.197.
[25] VII.180. It has been suggested that this sacrifice may have been made by the crew of one of the many Phoenician ships in the Persian fleet, see Clemen, Nachrichten, 80.
[26] Plutarch, Themistocles, 13 (cited in this connection by A. D. H. Bivar in Mithraic Studies (ed. J. R. Hinnells), I, 104.
[27] Herodotus IX.119.
[28] VII.117.
[29] VII.120, 121. According to later Greek writers, Darius III (and perhaps other Achaemenian kings of the later period) was accustomed to breakfast as well as dine; for references see Calmeyer, Iran XVIII, 1980, 58 with nn. 34, 35. But Xenophon, writing in the reign of Artaxerxes II, still tells of the Persian custom of eating only once a day when hunting or on the march (Cyropaedia I.2.8 ff.).

be lengthy; and the custom prevented the frequent or casual partaking of food.[30] In this respect it is interesting also that Herodotus, marvelling at the size of Xerxes' host mustered before Thermopylae, mentions the number of dogs accompanying it.[31] The traditional Zoroastrian observance of giving food to a dog before eating anything oneself goes back to an unknown antiquity.[32]

The Athenians meantime were praying and sacrificing to Boreas for a wind to scatter the Persian fleet; and a storm indeed sprang up, for which they afterwards built a temple in gratitude to the god.[33] The tempest raged for three days, destroying ships and men, until 'at last the magi, by using victims and wizards' spells on the wind, and by sacrificing to Thetis and the Nereids, did make it to cease on the fourth day, or mayhap it was not of their doing but of itself that it abated. To Thetis they sacrificed after hearing from the Ionians the story how it was from this country that she had been carried off by Peleus, and all the Sepiad headland belonged to her and the other daughters of Nereus'.[34] The Greeks for their part so rejoiced at the havoc the storm had brought that 'they offered prayer and libation to Poseidon', and 'to this day' (Herodotus observes) 'they have called Poseidon by the title of Deliverer'.[35]

After their bitterly-won victory at Thermopylae the Persians marched steadily south, greeted in friendly fashion by some of the Greek peoples and opposed by others. Occasionally there was a working off of old scores among themselves by the Hellenes, so that the Thessalians, for example, guiding the Persians through Phocis, encouraged them to plunder and ravage there, which they duly did, 'setting fire to towns and temples'.[36] In general Xerxes' conduct in such matters was pragmatic. He allowed the destruction of the temples of those who showed themselves hostile, but respected the holy places of those who aided him.[37] The Athenians were among the most resolute in resistance, and so when he took Athens his army stormed the Acropolis, slew its defenders to a man, 'plundered the temple and burnt the whole of the Acropolis'.[38] It was only when this had been done that Xerxes ordered the Athenian exiles in his train

[30] See M. Boyce and F. Kotwal, 'Zoroastrian *bāj* and *drōn*—II', BSOAS XXXIV, 1971, 298-306.
[31] VII.187.
[32] See Boyce, Stronghold, 143-8 (with HZ I 163 to be modified accordingly).
[33] VII.189.
[34] VII.191. Despite Herodotus' explanation, some think that the magi were in fact sacrificing to the Āpas, the Iranian yazatas of the Waters (see, e.g., Zaehner, Dawn and Twilight, 161).
[35] VII.192, 193.
[36] VIII.33.
[37] See, e.g. VII.197, VIII.50.
[38] VIII.53.

to 'go up to the Acropolis and offer sacrifice after their manner', which they did.[39]

It was to acts such as this, offending their gods, that the Greeks attributed the Persians' defeat at Salamis (after which battle Xerxes himself retired to Asia Minor), and Plataea, fought under the generalship of the valiant Mardonius. Before Plataea both Greeks and Persians had repeated recourse to divination, for which, in this foreign land, Mardonius employed a Greek from Elis, 'hired ... for no small wage', who 'sacrificed and wrought zealously, both for the hatred he bore the Lacedaemonians, and for gain'.[40] After Plataea, where Mardonius died, in 479, the defeated Persians straggled back to Asia Minor, having suffered tremendous losses. Symbolically, Xerxes in his own earlier retreat failed to recover the sacred chariot of Ahuramazda, left for safe-keeping with seemingly friendly Paeonians, who however gave it and its sacred horses to mountain Thracians, and declared to Xerxes that they had been stolen from them.[41]

In the aftermath of Plataea the Greeks steadily recovered from Persian control cities in which there had been left Persian governors and garrisons. Herodotus records: 'Of those who were dispossessed by the Greeks there was none whom king Xerxes deemed a valiant man except only Boges, from whom they took Eion. But this Boges he never ceased praising, and gave very great honour to his sons who were left alive in Persia; and indeed Boges proved himself worthy of all praise. Being besieged by the Athenians ... he might have departed under treaty from Eion and so returned to Asia; yet he would not, lest the king should think he had saved his life out of cowardice, but he resisted to the last. Then, when there was no food left within his walls, he piled up a great pyre and slew and cast into the fire his children and wife and concubines and servants; after that, he took all the gold and silver from the city and scattered it from the walls into the Strymon; which done, he cast himself into the fire. Thus it is that he is justly praised by the Persians to this day'.[42] We have already met Herodotus censuring Cambyses, as a Persian, for burning a corpse; and in later times self-destruction by fire was regarded as a great sin by Zoroastrians, since it compounded that of suicide with pollution of the sacred element with *nasā*, dead matter; but it seems that priestly scholastics, with their unrelenting logic, had

[39] VIII.54.
[40] IX.37, 38.
[41] VIII.115.
[42] VII.107.

not yet succeeded in imprinting such a thought on Persian minds in the fifth century.

In general the religious picture which emerges from Herodotus' account of the war is no more edifying than is usual when humanity is engaged in conflict, with both sides importuning the divine beings for success by every means in their power, which included prayers, hymns, libations, blood sacrifices and rich offerings. The Persians were ready evidently to entreat local gods on occasion, while at other times risking their displeasure by plundering and destroying their shrines; and we find Thracians invoking for aid the soul of the Persian Artachaees. In the course of pillaging temples Xerxes' soldiers carried off a number of statues as booty, and brought them back to their various homelands,[43] so that as a result of the war knowledge became more widespread of naturalistic Greek representations of gods; but decades were still, it seems, to pass before Iranians began themselves to set up images in worship.

War between Persia and Athens lasted for some further time; but whether in war or uneasy peace, Persia with her wealth and power remained a potent influence among the Hellenes. Greek politicians, soldiers and men of learning continued down the generations to follow the 'royal road' which led across Asia Minor and south to Susa; and some three hundred Greeks are known to have visited or lived at the Achaemenian court in diverse reigns.[44] Greek mercenaries with their captains served in the Great King's armies, and contact between Iranians and Greeks in Asia Minor continued unbroken.

The legends of Ostanes and Gobryas

According to a Greek tradition which has been judged to have a basis in fact,[45] Xerxes was accompanied on his Greek campaign by the chief magus, Ostanes. (In the Sasanian period the chief magus, Kirdēr, is known similarly to have accompanied Shabuhr I on a Roman campaign.) In time the Greeks made of this Ostanes the first known master of what was popularly regarded as the craft of the magi, that is, a sometimes sinister occultism; and according to a legend preserved by the Elder Pliny, as Ostanes travelled with the king he 'broadcast the seeds, as it

[43] For references see M. Roaf, 'Texts about the sculptures ... at Persepolis', Iran XVIII, 1980, 72 with n. 48.
[44] See A. Wiedersich, cited by G. Walser, 'Griechen am Hofe des Grosskönigs', Festgabe H. von Greyerz, Bern 1967, 189-202.
[45] See Bidez-Cumont, Mages, I 168.

were, of his monstrous doctrine, incidentally leaving a contamination upon every place that he visited'.[46]

Another legend, recorded in the fourth century B.C., was that Xerxes sent a magus named Gobryas to the island of Delos, to ensure that its shrine to Apollo was not pillaged during the war.[47]

The Lycian tomb of a hero of Salamis?

One of the most impressive ancient monuments of Asia Minor is the so-called 'Harpy Tomb' of Xanthos, the capital of Lycia.[48] Lycia had been conquered for Cyrus by Harpagos the Mede, who became its first Achaemenian satrap and apparently founded an Irano-Lycian dynasty there; and the tomb, closely dated on stylistic grounds to between 480 and 470, has been seen as a heroon built for his descendant Cybernis, who captained the fifty Lycian ships in Xerxes' fleet.[49] These would naturally have sailed with the Ionian and Carian naval contingent under the command of Ariabignes, a brother of Xerxes; and this contingent suffered greatly at Salamis, in which battle Ariabignes himself was killed, and with him 'many other Persians and Medes and allies of renown'.[50] Probably, it is suggested, Cybernis fell there and was honoured with this noble tomb, built for him by his kinsman Spentōdāta, who ruled Lycia as its satrap from c. 475-469.

Spentōdāta bore a notably Zoroastrian name, preserved in Lycian form as Spendaza; and the sepulchre which he had made, though in a local tradition of stone-built tombs, conforms fully with the Zoroastrian need to protect the creations from pollution. It consists of a huge rectangular monolith, over 5 m. (16 ft) high, and weighing about 10 tons, which was raised to stand like a great pillar on a square marble base, itself about 1.45 m. (4 ft 10 ins) high. The tomb chamber was hollowed out of the top of the monolith, and the coffin must have been put in it before a huge capstone was set in place. This massive block of stone has three inverted steps, like the top of some giant fire-holder, and is crowned with a smaller block of stone. The tomb has thus the characteristic Zoroastrian triplicity, embodied in the main elements of base, pillar and capstone, as well as in the inverted steps of the last feature; and the embalmed corpse was thoroughly isolated from the good creations.

[46] Natural History XXX.8; see Bidez-Cimont, op. cit., I 167 ff. for the various Greek legends which grew up around the name of Ostanes.

[47] Pseudo-Plato, Axiochus, ed. Burne, 371; F.-P. 22.

[48] On this see, with full references and illustrations, A. Shahbazi, Irano-Lycian Monuments, Ch.1. The following interpretation is his, a development of the studies particularly of A. Milchhoefer and F. J. Tritsch.

[49] See Herodotus VII.92, 98.

[50] Ibid., VIII.89.

Around the four walls of the tomb chamber were set marble slabs, carved in low relief in Graeco-Persian style. The east side, facing toward the market place of ancient Xanthos, shows a scene thought to depict Harpagos himself, and perhaps copied from his own lost tomb; for on it is displayed a court scene reminiscent of those carved at Persepolis, with a dignified elderly noble, wearing a long square-cut beard, enthroned and holding sceptre and flower. He has two attendants, and two persons are before him, offering gifts. On the south side it appears to be his consort who is shown, and on the west side other princesses, while the north side is devoted, it seems, to Cybernis himself. He too is seated on a throne, but he is bare-headed and reaches out to take a plumed helmet from an armed warrior who stands before him.

On the west side a small aperture was cut, it is thought as a symbolic 'window' for the passage of the soul—symbolic, because it seems then to have been sealed with a block of marble. Above it is a carving of a cow suckling her calf, a motif put on his coins by Spentōdāta, and one thoroughly appropriate for either coin or tomb of a Zoroastrian, rich as it is in Gathic significance. But in angle-slabs between the main blocks of marble there are carved the figures of serene bird-women, Greek sirens, who gently bear away diminutive figures of the dead. (It was an early misrepresentation of these sirens as harpies which gave the tomb its name.) This is only one—although certainly the most striking—of the Greek elements in the tomb sculptures, which are among the earliest pieces of evidence for the patronage to be so lavishly bestowed down the years by Iranian nobles on Greek craftsmen. The appearance of the sirens does not, however, prove the influences of Greek beliefs on Zoroastrian thought, any more than the heavily Romanized tomb carvings of eighteenth-century Europe prove the influence of Roman paganism on Christianity at that time.

Xerxes at home: the Daiva inscription

The Greek war shows Xerxes less resolute and able in the field than Cyrus or Darius. He appears sometimes magnanimous and liberal, sometimes harsh and unpredictable, with the caprices of an absolute ruler. Yet he is also shown as a religious man, acknowledging the disciplines of required observance; and although Herodotus tells tales which suggest that he was not able to curb his strong-willed Queen of queens, Amestris, yet one of these tales also shows the king strictly faithful to his given

word, distressing though the consequences threatened to be to him.[51]

Xerxes lives not only through Herodotus' work, but also through his own inscriptions, carved like his father's in cuneiform script, and most of them similarly trilingual. The greater number of these have been found at Persepolis, where he completed and added magnificently to what Darius had begun—as he himself declares: 'Much other good (construction) was built within this Persepolis, which I built and which my father built. Whatever good construction is seen, all that by the will of Ahuramazda we built'.[52] Most of his Persepolis inscriptions are concerned, somewhat monotonously, with the palaces and colonnades which he erected; but he also had carved on stone tablets the famous Daiva inscription,[53] of which an exact copy (of the Old Persian version only) has been found at Pasargadae.[54]

The inscription begins with an enumeration of all the countries, Iranian and non-Iranian, ruled over by Xerxes, and goes on to refer to one (presumably Egypt) which was in rebellion when he came to the throne. The text continues: 'Then Ahuramazda bore me aid. By the will of Ahuramazda I smote that country and put it down in its place. And among these countries was (a place) where previously Daivas were worshipped. Then by the will of Ahuramazda I destroyed that Daiva-sanctuary, and I made proclamation, 'Daivas shall not be worshipped!' Where previously Daivas were worshipped, there I worshipped Ahuramazda with due order and rites'.[55] Xerxes' lack of precision as to where this Daiva-sanctuary was has left scope for much scholarly debate. There have been those who have sought to identify it either with the Babylonian Esagila, or with the Athenian Parthenon.[56] Herodotus provides evidence that makes the latter identification impossible, however; for, as we have seen, he records that after Xerxes burnt the Acropolis he ordered Athenians to ascend there to 'offer sacrifice after their manner'. There was no question of the Persian king solemnizing the rites of Mazda-worship in that alien place. Nor is there the smallest likelihood that he would have done so in the Esagila, which remained in ruins until the downfall of his dynasty, while the priests of Marduk

[51] IX.109-11. For a recent study of Xerxes' character see M. Mayrhofer, 'Xerxes, König der Könige', Österreichische Ak. d. Wissenschaften, Festvortrag, 1970, 158-70. (French transl. in Comm. Cyrus I, Acta Iranica I, 1974, 108-16).

[52] XPa 13-7 (Kent, Old Persian, 148).

[53] XPh (ibid., 150-2).

[54] See Stronach, Pasargadae, 152.

[55] XPh 32-41.

[56] For references to the discussions see U. Bianchi, 'L'inscription "des daivas" et le Zoroastrisme des Achémenides', RHR 192, 1977, 3-30, and add Gnoli, Time and Homeland, 77-9.

continued their own ancient rites of worship nearby. Persian tolerance of 'anarya' religions appears to have been the beneficent aspect of a fundamental indifference to them, tempered by pragmatism; and destruction of temples is recorded only as a punitive measure after political provocation. (The Babylonians had revolted, and the Athenians were Persia's open enemies,[57] and had sacrilegiously murdered Darius' heralds.[58]) With the Daiva-sanctuary, Xerxes' words make it clear, there was a religious motive for the destruction. Old Persian 'daiva' is equivalent to Avestan 'daeva'; and the natural interpretation of Xerxes' words is that, as a Zoroastrian, he was recording the destruction of an Iranian sanctuary devoted to the worship of those warlike beings condemned by the prophet as having 'rushed to Fury, with whom they have afflicted the world and mankind'.[59] What the nature of the 'place of the Daivas' (Daivadāna) was can only be surmised.[60] It was presumably in the open, since there is no record yet of Persians building temples; but as such it could have consisted of altars on a plain (as at Pasargadae), or on an artificial mound (like the one at Zela, or that made of brushwood by the Scythians in their worship of 'Ares'), or even a sacred grove in the then still afforested land of Iran.

The phrase in the inscription translated here as 'due order and rites' has also been the subject of much discussion, since there are problems both as to the meaning of the words and their inflection.[61] The Old Persian expression is *artāčā brazmaniya*. The latter term, apparently equivalent to Sanskrit *bráhman*, is generally understood to mean 'with solemn rites, due ceremonial behaviour',[62] although the grammatical case is perplexing. The former has been variously understood, the readiest interpretation being to see in it the equivalent of the Avestan common noun *aša*, hence 'with order, correctly'. It has also been taken, among other things, as a locative of **artu*, Av. *ṛtu-* 'time, season', hence 'at the (correct) time';[63] and it is true that Zoroastrianism restricts the solemnizing of the main acts of worship by day to the period between sunrise and noon. (Since these are the hours sent under the protection of Mithra, this appears yet another reason for the advancement of the cult of that Ahura at the expense of Varuna's, since he is necessarily

[57] See, e.g., Herodotus V.96.

[58] Ibid., VII.133.

[59] Y 30.6; see HZ I 201. Against the 'daivadāna' being Nush-i Jan see above, p. 37 n. 136.

[60] On the term 'daivadāna' see Gershevitch, JNES XXIII, 1964, 35.

[61] For a bibliography down to 1964 see Brandenstein-Mayrhofer, Hb.d. Altpersischen, s.v.; and for later references Mayrhofer, art. cit. in n. 51, 161 n. 10 (110 n. 10).

[62] See Henning, 'Bráhman', TPS 1945, 108-18.

[63] See R. Schmitt, Orientalia, N.S. 32, 1963, 442 ff.

invoked at each such religious service.) Whatever the exact meaning of the words, the sense is clearly that the king worshipped Ahuramazda in a properly ordained manner.

It is not known whether Cyrus or Darius had earlier sought to put a forcible end to unZoroastrian worship among Iranians; but it seems likely that in the interests of the stability of their own rule, if not for higher reasons, they would have wished all their Iranian subjects to be their co-religionists; and the evidence of later times suggests that the Zoroastrian magi would have been zealous in urging them to bring this about. But since Iran is a huge land, with mountains and deserts, forests and valleys so remote that the king's commands could have gone long unheard there, pockets of paganism seem to have managed to survive down the centuries.

Xerxes' inscription continues: 'And there was other (matter) which had been ill done; that I made good. That which I did, all I did by the will of Ahuramazda. Ahuramazda bore me aid, until I completed the work. Thou who shalt be hereafter, if thou shalt think "Happy may I be when living, and blessed (*artavan-*) when dead", have respect for the law which Ahuramazda has established; worship Ahuramazda with due order and rites. The man who has respect for the law which Ahuramazda has established, and worships Ahuramazda with due order and rites, he both becomes happy while living and becomes blessed when dead'.[64]

Attempts have been made to see the use made here of *artavan* (Av. *ašavan*), apparently exclusively for one attaining Paradise, as a part of the terminology of the old religion, and alien to Zoroastrianism;[65] but these have been shown to lack justification.[66] There is a passage in the Vendidad which provides a fairly close parallel to Xerxes' words, but with the terms reversed. There it is said of a man who commits a certain offence: 'Living, he is not *ašavan-*, dead, he does not enjoy the Best Existence [i.e. Paradise]'.[67] Darius had earlier said: 'Whoever shall worship Ahuramazda as long as he has strength, he will be happy, both living and dead'.[68] The states of being happy and blessed thus appear correlated: only the man who is righteous can be happy here

[64] XPh 41-56.
[65] See F. B. J. Kuiper, IIJ IV, 1960, 182-9; Gershevitch, art. cit., 18-9 with n. 32.
[66] See Bianchi, art. cit., 7 ff.; for a bibliography of studies of *ašavan/artavan* see Gnoli, Time and Homeland, 75 n. 102 with Addendum, p. 238.
[67] Vd V.61. Cited in this connection by J. Kellens, Studien z. Indologie u. Iranistik, 2, 1976, 113-32, see Bianchi, art. cit., 7-8.
[68] DB V.18-20.

below, and only he, through his righteousness here, can be blessed and hence happy hereafter. 'The virtue of the *ašavan* is not specific; it is acquired during a lifetime by religious acts of merit, and receives divine confirmation at the gates of Paradise'.[69] The Daiva inscription thus shows Xerxes concerned with morality as well as with doctrine and observance.

A copy of one of Darius' tomb inscriptions

Among the inscriptions of Xerxes which are in all essentials simply copies of those of his father is a reproduction of one of Darius' tomb inscriptions, which contains some of that king's most personal and ethical sayings.[70] The copy was found in 1967 in what appears to have been an Achaemenian building on the plain a little to the north-west of the terrace of Persepolis. It differs from the original substantially only by the substitution of the name 'Khšayārshan' for 'Dārayavahu', and thus shows the son following his father faithfully in thought and word, as he seems to have striven to follow him in deeds.

Xerxes' own tomb

In death too Xerxes held to his father's ways, in that for his own last resting-place he had a tomb cut in the rock-face of Naqš-i Rustam close to that of Darius, and with exactly the same sculptures carved above its door.[71] But it has only one burial vault, with three cists in it, in contrast to the three vaults and nine cists of Darius' tomb; and, remarkably, neither it nor the other two royal tombs in the cliff-face have inscriptions, so that the attribution of this particular one to Xerxes has necessarily an element of conjecture. It is based, however, on three facts: that this tomb is close to that of Darius; that it too was carved out at a place where the angle of cliff-face was particularly suitable; and that the workmanship is of a high standard.

[69] Kellens, art. cit.; see Bianchi, loc. cit.
[70] I.e. DNb; see B. Gharib, 'A newly found Old Persian inscription', Iran. Ant. VIII, 1968, 54-69; Hinz, Funde und Forschungen, 45-51; C. G. Starr, 'Greeks and Persians in the fourth century B.C.', Iran. Ant. XI, 1976, 56-7 (English transl. with some material supplied by G. G. Cameron).
[71] For details see Schmidt, Persepolis III,93.

CHAPTER ELEVEN

ARTAXERXES I (465-424 B.C.)

In 465 Xerxes was assassinated, and after intrigue and further bloodshed was succeeded by a younger son, Artaxerxes I, then only eighteen years old. His name, in Persian Artakhšaṣa, 'Having dominion through Arta', was an admirable one for a Zoroastrian prince. Plutarch later characterized him as 'preeminent among the kings of Persia for gentleness and magnanimity', and some exonerate him from all blame in the palace revolution.[1]

The end of the use of Elamite and the development of an Iranian scribal tradition

Internal records for Artaxerxes' long reign exist, but even more meagrely than for those of Darius and Xerxes. He continued, like his father and grandfather, to build at Persepolis, and has left sculptured representations of himself on its palace walls;[2] but the one inscription of his found there differs only by his name from others carved for his forbears.[3] This inscription is in Old Persian and Akkadian, with no Elamite version; and the Elamite documents in the Persepolis treasury cease in the seventh year of his reign, in 458. This is presumably because Elamite, a local language written on clay in a cumbrous syllabary, was then officially abandoned for Aramaic, the lingua franca of the Near East. Aramaic was normally written on parchment, and so relatively few Aramaic documents survive. Babylonian scribes had been employed at Persepolis, writing Aramaic;[4] but probably by Artaxerxes' time the Elamite chancellery staff were well able themselves to change to this language. When Persians first became scribes is unknown; but later evidence shows that Iranian scribes were priests, drawn from what was the Iranian learned class, and coming to form a hereditary group within it. Presumably the sons of scribes underwent the initial training common to priests' sons[5] before entering scribal schools to acquire the specialized knowledge

[1] See Plutarch, Life of Artaxerxes, I.1; and for his exoneration, most recently, A. Shahbazi, 'The Persepolis "Treasury Reliefs" once more.', AMI N.F. IX, 1976, 151-6.
[2] See above, p. 100 ff.
[3] A¹Pa (Kent, Old Persian, 153).
[4] See above, p. 138.
[5] See HZ I 8-9.

of their craft—in the Achaemenian period essentially a knowledge of written Aramaic. The scribe was called by a hybrid Perso-Akkadian name, **dipivara* (Middle Persian *dibēr*) 'keeper of archives'; and there is no evidence to suggest that in the Achaemenian period he ever used his alien art to commit religious texts to writing.[6] Indeed, apart from the Old Persian inscriptions in their special cuneiform syllabary, there is no trace of any Iranian language being written before the Parthian era.

Herodotus on Persian religion

It was in Artaxerxes' reign that Herodotus wrote his history, taking advantage, as a Persian citizen, of opportunities to travel widely in the western satrapies; but he appears never to have visited Iran itself. His observations on Persian religion were made accordingly from what he learnt in Asia Minor; and probably for these he depended partly on informants, since it is unlikely that as a non-Zoroastrian—and therefore necessarily unclean in the eyes of the faithful—he would have been allowed to be present at acts of worship.

It is in his general remarks on 'the usages of the Persians' that Herodotus makes the following statements: 'It is not their custom to make and set up statues and images and altars, but those who make such they deem foolish, as I suppose, because they never believed the gods, as do the Greeks, to be in the likeness of men; but they call the whole circle of heaven Zeus, and to him they offer sacrifice on the highest peaks of the mountains; they sacrifice also to the sun and moon and earth and fire and water and winds. These are the only gods to whom they have ever sacrificed from the beginning'.[7]

Herodotus' explanation of why the Persians made no statues seems wide of the mark, since the Iranians, like other Indo-European peoples, in general conceived the divine beings anthropomorphically; but they were undoubtedly accustomed to worshipping them through natural phenomena, and they deprecated the building of shrines for them, considering (as Cicero later said) that their 'temple and home was the whole world that we know'.[8] Otherwise his account seems a very fair attempt by a Greek gentleman to render the Zoroastrian doctrine of Ahuramazda and the Ameša Spentas, immanent in their natural 'creations'; indeed Zoroaster himself speaks in the Gathas of Ahuramazda ('Zeus') being

[6] On the oral transmission of the Avesta through this period see K. Hoffmann, Handbuch der Orientalistik (ed. B. Spuler), I.iv.1, Leiden 1958, 1-19.
[7] I.131.
[8] De Legibus II.10.26 (Clemen, Fontes, 29; F.-P. 32).

clothed in the sky as a garment.[9] There is moreover archaeological evidence for the western Iranians having gone up to high places to worship; and still in the twentieth century the Iranian Zoroastrians go on seasonal pilgrimages into the mountains to offer sacrifice.[10]

Herodotus then goes on to describe how a Persian layman sacrificed to his gods: 'When about to sacrifice they neither build altars nor kindle fire, they use no libations, nor music, nor fillets, nor barley meal; but to whomsoever of the gods a man will sacrifice, he leads the beast to an open space and then calls on the god, himself wearing a crown on his cap, of myrtle for choice. To pray for blessings for himself alone is not lawful for the sacrificer; rather he prays that it may be well with the king and all the Persians; for he reckons himself among them. He then cuts the victim limb from limb into portions, and having seethed the flesh spreads the softest grass, trefoil by choice, and places all of it on this. When he has so disposed it a magus comes near and chants over it the song of the birth of the gods, as the Persian tradition relates it; for no sacrifice can be offered without a magus. Then after a little while the sacrificer carries away the flesh and uses it as he pleases'.[11]

In this account there seem to be some small misunderstandings. Thus one would expect the grass to be strewed before the sacrifice was made,[12] and the priest to be present at the sacrifice itself, if not actually to perform it then at least to consecrate the act and bless the creature's spirit before it departs.[13] What he would in fact have chanted at such an observance in the fifth century can only be guessed at; but Herodotus' 'theogony' could well represent a Greek misunderstanding of the nature of an Avestan yašt, a hymn recited in honour of the divinity to whom the sacrifice was devoted.[14] Otherwise his description accords well with the rites of lay sacrifice as practised among the Zoroastrians of Iran down to the twentieth century A.C.: the sacrifice being made in the open, with invocation of an individual yazata; the use of evergreen; the prayers for the whole community, in which the individual is included; the boiling of the flesh; and the carrying away of all of it by the sacrificer

[9] Y 30.5 (see Darmesteter, ZA i 22-3, 222 with n. 16); cf. Yt XIII.2-3 and for further passages see Bailey, Zor. Problems, 126-7.

[10] On some ancient 'high places' see Schippmann, Feuerheiligtümer, 362-8 (Tamar), 380-8 (Qiz Qal^{c}a), 391-3 (Damavand); and on Zendan-i Suleiman in Persian Azarbaijan (a 'high place' of the Median period, but probably not Iranian) see R. M. Boehmer, Archäologischer Anzeiger 1967, 873-85; W. Kleiss and R. Naumann, Zendan-i Suleiman: die Bauwerke, Wiesbaden 1971. On modern pilgrimages into the mountains see Boyce, Stronghold, Ch.10.

[11] I.132 (with 'seethed' substituted for the 'roasted' of the Loeb ed., a mistranslation of *hepsésē*).

[12] See HZ I 167.

[13] See HZ I 150, 169.

[14] So Benveniste, Persian religion, 31.

(the divinity being satisfied with the intention, the odour and a symbolic share).[15] There is no reason, therefore, to regard Herodotus' account as other than that of an orthodox Zoroastrian lay observance of his day, such as he had learnt of from his Persian friends.[16]

That Herodotus derived his information in general from noblemen rather than priests is borne out by his account of the upbringing of Persian children: 'They educate their boys from five to twenty years old, and teach them three things only, riding and archery and truth-telling'.[17] This statement could only apply to boys of the 'warrior' estate; but it accords with basic Zoroastrian teachings in its emphasis on truthfulness, and with Zoroastrian custom in its stylised triplication. On general usages Herodotus observes that there is 'a praiseworthy law ... which suffers not the king himself to slay any man for one offence, nor any other Persian for one offence to do incurable hurt to one of his servants. Not till reckoning shows that the offender's wrongful acts are more and greater than his services may a man give vent to his anger'.[18] This was to apply on earth the principle of weighing a man's good deeds against his evil ones which Rašnu the Judge puts into practice hereafter; and we have already seen this principle being acted upon by Darius.[19] Herodotus also emphasizes the Persians' respect for honesty: 'They hold lying to be the foulest of all, and next to that debt; for which they have many other reasons, but this in especial, that the debtor must needs (so they say) speak some falsehood'. Herodotus further states that the Persians did not permit themselves to speak of what they were not allowed to do, which (it has been pointed out) accords with the essential Zoroastrian teaching that man must be good in word as well as deed. Lying, he says, they regarded as the worst of offences; and they held leprosy to be an affliction visited upon a man who had sinned against the sun—presumably, that is, against Mithra, by becoming *mithrō.druj* and breaking his given word.[20]

As to observances, it is notable that in his general comments on Persian religion, Herodotus has nothing to say about fire, although in one particular connection he observes that 'the Persians hold fire to be a

[15] For such modern observances see Boyce, Stronghold, 61, 175, 179, 244-6.

[16] On his Persian informants in general see, e.g., W. W. Lloyd, Xanthian Marbles: The Harpy Tomb, London 1854, 95; J. Wells, 'The Persian friends of Herodotus', JHS XXVII, 1907, 37-47; Burn, Persia and the Greeks, 13-14; Hignett, Xerxes' Invasion, 30-1.

[17] I.136.

[18] I.137.

[19] See above, p. 84.

[20] I.138, on which see Clemen, Nachrichten, 113, 114.

god'; [21] but it seems that the cult of fire (centred still on the hearth fire) did not attract his own attention in any noteworthy way. Of water, however, he says: 'Rivers they chiefly reverence; they will neither make water nor spit nor wash their hands therein, nor suffer anyone so to do'.[22] This is regular Zoroastrian observance out of respect for the pure creation of water and the Ameša Spenta, Haurvatāt, who guards and informs it: no natural source of water may be polluted in such ways.

With regard to the disposal of the dead, Herodotus observes: 'There are ... matters concerning the dead which are secretly and obscurely told—how the dead bodies of Persians are not buried before they have been mangled by bird or dog. That this is the way of the magi I know for a certainty; for they do not conceal the practice. But this is certain, that before the Persians bury the body in earth they embalm it in wax'.[23] As we have seen, inhumation had been the regular funerary rite of the western Iranians before they embraced Zoroastrianism; and Herodotus' remarks suggest that the laity found it hard to exchange this for exposure. His statement about embalming presumably applies only to the wealthy, who seem in this to have preferred royal example to religious percept. The magi, however, having adopted the eastern faith, appear to have accepted its observances unreservedly, with the discipline and logic characteristic of their fraternity.

The unusual manner of disposal of the dead was one Zoroastrian practice which particularly caught the attention of Europeans when they in their turn encountered descendants of the Old Persians in the seventeenth century A.C.; another was the zeal with which the Zoroastrians killed noxious or obnoxious creatures.[24] This latter custom too was recorded by Herodotus with reference to the priests, of whom he wrote: 'The magi kill with their hands every creature, save only dogs and men; they kill all alike, ants and snakes, creeping and flying things, and take much pride therein'.[25] The doctrine concerning ants, snakes and the like was that these were 'khrafstras', evil creatures which Anra Mainyu had brought into existence to harm the good creations. It was therefore meritorious to slay them; and there is an Avestan word for an implement, a 'khrafstra-smiter' (*khrafstragan*), which priests carried for this purpose.[26] Since they would also have

[21] III.16, see above, p. 72.
[22] I.138.
[23] I.140.
[24] See Boyce, Zoroastrians, 179-80.
[25] I.140.
[26] Vd 14.8, 18.2.

killed sacrificial animals, Herodotus' exaggeration is pardonable when he says that they killed 'every creature'; he is accurate moreover in indicating the privileged position of the dog, which is characteristic of Zoroastrianism down the ages.

In general Herodotus' comments on the religion of the Persians accord very well with Zoroastrian beliefs and practices as these would have been apprehended by an intelligent and inquiring observer, who did not seek to penetrate far into doctrine or priestly acts of worship, but was content to record what he saw himself and what his friends could tell him.

Xanthos of Lydia

Artaxerxes I had yet another subject who, a little before Herodotus, composed a monumental historical work in Greek, namely Xanthos, who wrote a detailed history of his native land, Lydia; but this survives only in fragments, whose authenticity is sometimes in doubt.[27] In one of these fragments Xanthos describes a storm breaking over the pyre prepared for Croesus, the last king of Lydia, at the orders of his conqueror, Cyrus the Great: 'Now while in great haste they were stretching a purple canopy over Croesus, superstitious fears fell upon the people, who were alarmed by the darkness and the storm ...; at the same time, the oracles of the Sibyl and the sayings of Zoroaster came to their minds'. The Sibyl needed no explanation for his Greek readers, but he adds some elucidation concerning Zoroaster, saying that 'the Persians claim that it was from him they derived the rule against burning dead bodies or defiling fire in any other way'.[28] These statements, if correctly attributed to Xanthos, represent the oldest known reference to the prophet in Greek literature. Their implication, that the Iranian soldiers in Cyrus' army were Zoroastrians, is undoubtedly historically probable; but the actual story of the pyre for Croesus is generally held to be a fiction, which could presumably have reached Xanthos through popular oral tradition.

The name of the prophet appears in this Xanthos-fragment in its best known Greek form, Zōroástrēs, which, it is suggested, reflects a Persian Zara.uštra.[29] This form gave scope for Greek etymologies containing the word *astér* 'star', which made the prophet's name sig-

[27] For a bibliography of discussions see K. Ziegler, 'Xanthos der Lyder', Pauly-Wissowa, Realencyclopädie d. class. Alterthumswissenschaft, 1370-1.
[28] C. Müller, Fragmenta Historicorum Graecorum I, 42, frg. 19; Clemen, Fontes 30-1; F.-P. 1.
[29] See F. Windischmann, Zoroastrische Studien, 45; I. Gershevitch, 'Zoroaster's own contribution', JNES XXIII, 1964, 38.

nificant in connection with the astrological lore later imputed to the magi.[30] Other forms of his name are attested in Greek, such as Zōrothrústēs, Zarathroústēs,[31] which suggest the variety of sources from which the Hellenes learnt of him. Vigorous discussion continues among modern scholars over the analysis of the Iranian forms themselves, their dialectal origins, and their relationship to Avestan 'Zarathuštra'.[32]

In writing of Cyrus' conquest Xanthos must have depended on tradition and hearsay; but he had ample opportunity to observe Zoroastrians in Lydia in his own day,[33] and Clement of Alexandria quotes from his 'writings on the magi' (probably a section of his great history) to the effect that 'Magian men cohabit with their mothers, they may also have like association with daughters and sisters'.[34] If the attribution to Xanthos is correct, this is the first reference to khvaetvadatha-unions outside the royal family.

A 'place of rites'

In 1903 an Aramaic inscription was published from a sandstone stele from Aswan (now in the Cairo museum). The inscription is damaged, but lines 2-5 have been read as follows: '. . . , commander of the garrison of Syene, built this *brzmdn'* in the month of Siwan, that is Meḥir, in the seventh year of Artaxerxes the King. By the grace of God, welfare'.[35] The date is thus June, 458 B.C. In the light of the word *brazmaniya* in Xerxes' Daiva inscription, the Old Persian *brzmdn'* (otherwise unrecorded) has been interpreted as **brazmadāna* or 'place of rites'.[36] It is evident that the Iranians, once they had settled in towns or among alien peoples, would have needed to establish places for the regular performance of religious ceremonies; and it is instructive to adduce early Parsi usage (at the time when the Indian community had only one sacred fire): wherever there were priests an empty building was then set aside for rituals and acts of worship.[37] A priest would bring embers from his own hearth fire into this building each morning to

[30] See Bidez-Cumont, Mages, I 6.
[31] See ibid., II 389 s.v.
[32] See, with further references, B. Schlerath, 'Noch einmal Zarathuštra', Die Sprache XXIII, 1977, 127-35; M. Mayrhofer, 'Zarathustra und kein Ende?', AAH XXV, 1977, 85-90.
[33] See (although with some anachronisms) Bidez-Cumont, op. cit., I 5-6.
[34] Clement, Stromata, III. 11.1; Clemen, Fontes, 3; F.-P. 2.
[35] See M. Bogoliubov, 'An Aramaic inscription from Aswan' (in Russian), Palestinski Sbornik 15 (78), 1966, 40-6, with bibliography of earlier attempts; and cf. his 'Titre honorifique d'un chef militaire achéménide en Haute-Égypte', Comm. Cyrus II, Acta Iranica 2, 1974, 109-14.
[36] See Bogoliubov, Palestinski Sbornik 15.
[37] See F. M. Kotwal, 'Some observations on the history of the Parsi Dar-i Mihrs', BSOAS XXXVII, 1974, 664-9.

provide the fire which is always present at Zoroastrian observances. The building itself was simply a sanctified place which offered safety from the dangers of pollution, such as nullify rites. The Parsi buildings were roofed, like ordinary houses; but the ancient **brazmadāna* perhaps had no more than a protective surrounding wall. There is evidence to suggest that the post of commander of the Syene garrison was hereditary in one Persian family; and it may have been held in 458 by a certain Vidarnag (*wydrng*), a name which fits the space on the stele.[38] He presumably, as a pious act, provided the Zoroastrian priests who ministered to his family and to the other Persians in Syene with a new or re-built 'place of rites'.

It seems probable that another term for such places was already in use then which eventually eclipsed **brazmadāna*, namely that first recorded in Islamic times as Dar-i Mihr or Bar-i Mihr, the 'Gate of Mithra'. Since Mithra extended his protection, as guardian of the first watch of the day, to almost all major rituals and acts of worship, he was peculiarly the divinity of a 'place of rites'.[39] The expression 'Gate of Mithra' may even go back to Median times and show Urartian influence; for 'the Urartian inscriptions contain a number of references to "gates" of the gods having been made for them by various kings'.[40] In an inscription from a small temple to Haldi at Patnos, built by king Menua (c. 810-786) the words 'gates of Haldi' appear to designate the temple itself;[41] but a rock-cut niche could also, it seems, be termed the 'gate' of the god who was worshipped there. An ancient 'gate' of this kind, a 'Gate of Ashrut', is identified by a cuneiform inscription at Ashotakert;[42] and in living Armenian usage the term 'Gate of Mithra' is applied to a rock-cut niche on the side of Zimzim Dagh, near Lake Van. Here too there is an Urartian inscription, which enumerates the regular sacrifices to be brought before the gods.[43]

The Zoroastrian Armenians of later times had a general word for a temple, *mehean*, which probably represents Old Iranian **māithryāna* or 'Place of Mithra'.[44] This term, introduced presumably to Armenia when that country was an Achaemenian satrapy, was possibly in origin a synonym for 'Gate of Mithra', and like **brazmadāna*, designated a 'place of rites'. If so, its application, like that of 'Gate of Mithra', must

[38] See Bogoliubov, loc. cit.; and cf. below, p. 200.
[39] See above, pp. 175-6, and Boyce, 'On Mithra's part in Zoroastrianism', BSOAS XXXII, 1969, 26-7.
[40] Van Loon, Urartian Art, 54.
[41] See ibid.
[42] See D. H. Müller, Die Keilinschrift von Aschrut-Darga, Denkschriften d. Wiener Ak. d. Wissenschaften 36 (1888), cited by van Loon, op. cit., 54 n. 52.
[43] See C. F. Lehmann-Haupt, Armenien einst und jetzt, II i, 59.
[44] So Meillet. Otherwise Gershevitch, Mithraic Studies (ed. J. R. Hinnells), II 357.

have been extended subsequently with the introduction of temple cults in the later Achaemenian period. The naming of a fixed 'place of rites' in these ways for Mithra must, one would think, have been yet another factor contributing to the exaltation of that divinity among the western Iranians.

It appears that some term for an edifice embodying the name of Mithra was in use among Persians in Egypt at the end of the Achaemenian period, for in a Greek papyrus of the third century B.C. there is a reference to a 'Mithraion' among the temples in Fayum.[45] The 'Mithraion', like the other sacred buildings listed there, possessed cattle; but this fact does not help to establish whether it was a temple with a consecrated icon in it (statue or sacred fire), or simply an empty 'place of rites'. In either case it had presumably been built for Persian garrison-troops in the Achaemenian period, and was being maintained by their descendants in Hellenistic times. (A man is named in connection with it who was the son of a 'Mithradata'.)

Artaxerxes I and Egypt

Early in Artaxerxes' reign Egypt rebelled once more under a certain Inaros, a member apparently of the Saite family. He obtained control of the Delta, and with help from Athens slew the Persian satrap, Achaemenes (Artaxerxes' uncle). Megabyzus (Bagabukhša) brought forces south from Syria and in 455 defeated the Athenians, after which the revolt collapsed. Arsames (Aršama), another member of the Achaemenian family, was appointed satrap of Egypt, which remained peaceful for the rest of Artaxerxes' reign. Many Aramaic documents of this period survive from there;[46] but they contain nothing to shed light on Persian religion, apart from some personal and theophoric names. They are, however, of general interest for the history of Zoroastrianism in that they represent the scribal tradition which eventually gave birth to the system of writing known as 'Pahlavi', in which the Zoroastrian literature of the Sasanian period was to be recorded.

Themistocles

Athenian support for the rebellion of Inaros brought about indirectly the death of Themistocles, the great Athenian statesman and victor at Salamis. Some time thereafter, accused of peculation, he had been banished from his native city, and was later pursued on suspicion of treason. Plutarch tells[47] how he made his perilous way from Ionia to the Persian court, and as a nameless Greek sought audience of Artaxerxes. The commander at the gate, used, it would seem, to Greek supplicants, told him that if he were admitted he would have to conform to the Persian custom, which was 'to honour the king and to pay obeisance to him as the image of the God who is the preserver of all things'. This seems a clear allusion to the concept embodied in the sculpture of the royal tombs, that the King of kings was Ahuramazda's appointed representative on earth.[48] Themistocles readily acquiesced in the condition, declaring himself prepared to submit to Persian laws, 'since such is the pleasure of the God who exalts the Persians'. It is interesting that the essential monotheism of the Zoroastrians is thus acknowledged by both speakers.

Themistocles, admitted to the King's presence, then revealed his identity, speaking through an interpreter. Artaxerxes heard him in silence; but, impressed by his courage and eloquence, received him subsequently into his favour, despite mutterings among the Persian veterans of Xerxes' war. Indeed, Plutarch records that Artaxerxes is said to have prayed that 'Arimanius' would always make his enemies minded to drive their own best men away from them, while one of his commanders credited the 'king's good genius' (that is, his khvarenah) with having brought the 'subtle serpent of Hellas' there. Themistocles asked leave to spend a year learning Persian, so that he could speak directly to the King about the affairs of Greece; and he succeeded so well in this that he became one of the King's intimates, and was even permitted to see and converse frequently with the queen-mother, Amestris, 'and at the King's bidding heard expositions also of Magian lore'.

Thereafter Artaxerxes gave Themistocles the revenues of several cities in Asia Minor, and he made his abode in Magnesia, where he lived honoured and tranquil, 'because the King paid no heed at all to Hellenic affairs, owing to his occupation with the state of the interior. But when Egypt revolted, with Athenian aid, and the Hellenic triremes sailed up as far as Cyprus and Cilicia', Artaxerxes sent messengers to Themistocles to remind him of a promise to act against his countrymen at need. Themistocles chose rather to end his own life, being then 65 years

[45] See U. Wilcken, 'Papyrus-Urkunden', Archiv für Papyrusforschung VII, 1924, 71-2.

[46] For a survey of publications see J. Greenfield, 'A New Corpus of Aramaic Texts of the Achaemenid Period from Egypt', JAOS 96, 1976, 131-5.

[47] Life of Themistocles, XXVI ff.

[48] See above, pp. 92-3. On the form of Persian obeisance see E. J. Bickerman, 'A propos d'un passage de Charès de Mytilène', La Parola del Passato XVIII (Naples), 1963, 241-55; R. N. Frye, 'Gestures of Deference to Royalty in Ancient Iran', Iran. Ant. IX, 1972, 102-7; Duchesne-Guillemin, 'La Royauté iranienne ...', Iranica (ed. Gnoli-Rossi), 378-9, with a rejection of the concept of divine kingship among the Achaemenian Persians.

of age. 'The king, on learning of the cause and the manner of his death, admired the man yet more, and continued to treat his friends and kindred with kindness'.

Megabyzus and Syria

Megabyzus, who had in the end defeated the Athenians in Egypt, was satrap of 'Beyond the River', that is, Syria southward to the border of Egypt. He was a great Persian noble, a descendant of the Megabyzus who, as one of the six, had aided Darius; and he was married to Amytis, a daughter of Xerxes and Amestris. He pledged his word to his Greek captives that their lives would be spared, and brought them, together with the rebel leader Inaros, back to Syria. There he succeeded for a time in shielding them from the vengefulness of the queen-mother; but five years later Arsames, satrap of Egypt, was ordered to bring them to the Persian court, where Amestris prevailed on her son to put them all to death. Megabyzus, his honour stained, abandoned his allegiance, rebelled, and defeated Artaxerxes' forces in two hard-fought battles before king and satrap were reconciled.[49]

Little is known of Syria under the Achaemenians, but it appears that the Persian satraps established themselves firmly there. 'Although there were occasional revolts (most reflecting the Phoenician cities' nostalgia for independence) the Persian administration on the whole succeeded in gaining the Syrians' trust; Syria was integrated into the Empire, and the Persians were able to induce a certain feeling of imperial patriotism. The Syrians took justifiable pride in belonging to an Empire that for generations was a great world power, indeed the only world power of the time'.[50] These developments meant that the imperial faith, Zoroastrianism, was practised in Syria and was able to exert its influence strongly there.

Artaxerxes I and the Jews

i) *Nehemiah*

Palestine, part of Megabyzus' satrapy, lay strategically on the way to Egypt, and this doubtless was one reason why the Achaemenians showed an active benevolence towards the Jews. In Babylonia the 'Yahweh-alonists' (those who offered their worship exclusively to Yahweh) appear to have enjoyed good relations with their Persian rulers from the time when Second Isaiah, who was one of their number, hailed

[49] See Olmstead, Persian Empire, 308 with n. 17, 312-3.
[50] H. Bengtson, 'Syria under the Persians', Greeks and Persians (ed. Bengtson), 404.

Cyrus as deliverer;[51] and in the twentieth year of his reign, in 444, Artaxerxes appointed a 'Yahweh-alonist', Nehemiah, to govern Jerusalem.[52] The Achaemenians regularly set local rulers over cities and small provinces, so that such an appointment was not in itself remarkable; but its results were to be of great significance for mankind. At that time there were syncretists among the Babylonian Jews, men who worshipped Yahweh but venerated other gods also, and syncretism appears to have predominated in Judea itself; and it was, it seems, the authority given to Nehemiah by the Persian King of kings which enabled him to gain more adherents for Yahweh-alonism in Jerusalem, and then throughout Judea, so that this became the faith of most of the inhabitants of the land, and could thereafter truly be termed Judaism. Without Nehemiah, it is suggested, the monolatrous worship of Yahweh might have remained principally a religion of synagogue-worship in the diaspora. 'The national, political, territorial side of Judaism . . . was, as a practical matter, the work of Nehemiah. He secured to the religion that double character—local as well as universal—which was to endure, in fact, for 500 years, and, in its terrible consequences, yet endures'.[53]

Zoroastrianism itself had long had this double character, being both universal in its message and yet special to the Iranian peoples. Parallels in matters of belief between the two faiths are best considered in connection with the work of Ezra; but there is a similarity in an area of observance where Nehemiah's own life seems of significance. Before he was appointed to his governorship he had been, he says, cupbearer to Artaxerxes;[54] and anyone who served the King of kings in such a capacity would have had necessarily to keep the Zoroastrian purity laws, so as not to bring pollution on his royal master. These laws, as we have seen, had their doctrinal basis in the belief that the good world created by Ahuramazda is under continual assault from the Hostile Spirit, Anra Mainyu, among whose weapons, it was held, were dirt, stench, blight, decay, disease and death. To reduce or banish any of these things was therefore to contribute, however humbly, to the defence of the good creation, and its ultimate redemption; whereas to come into serious contact with them was to contaminate a member of God's noblest creation, man, who thereby became unfit for prayer or worship, or the company of the pure. Down the centuries the Zoroastrian priests elaborated rules

[51] See Morton Smith, Palestinian parties and politics, 28 ff., 82 ff., 101 ff., 119 ff.
[52] See Nehemiah II.1. For the evidence which establishes that the Persian king was Artaxerxes I see Eissfeldt, Old Testament, 553.
[53] Morton Smith, op. cit., 150.
[54] Nehemiah II.1.

in defence of both actual and ritual purity, and so created in time an iron code which raised an effective barrier between Zoroastrians and any unbeliever who did not observe it;[55] indeed the existence of this code must have been a major factor in preventing the spread of Zoroastrianism as a coherent faith beyond the Iranian peoples themselves, since in its stringency it made demands of a kind to which it is easiest to grow accustomed in infancy. (This did not, of course, hinder the widespread influence of its immensely powerful individual doctrines.)

After years of necessary keeping of the Zoroastrian purity code (which has nothing in it repugnant to Jewish laws) it is hardly surprising that Nehemiah, although a layman, should have concerned himself in Jerusalem with questions of purity among the Jews. Nor does it seem overbold to suppose that it was Zoroastrian example, visible throughout the Empire, which led to the gradual transformation of the Jewish purity code from regulations concerning cultic matters to laws whose observance was demanded of every individual in his daily life, their setting being no longer only the Temple, but 'the field and the kitchen, the bed and the street',[56] and their keeping a matter which set the Jews in their turn apart from other peoples, in self-imposed isolation.

ii) *Ezra*

Scholarly opinion is still divided as to whether it was Artaxerxes I, in 458, or his grandson Artaxerxes II, in 398, who sent 'Ezra the scribe' to Jerusalem.[57] Ezra was, it seems, Commissary for Jewish Religious Affairs (in Biblical terms 'scribe of the law of the God of heaven'[58]); and the Bible preserves the letter of authority given him by 'Artaxerxes, King of kings', which runs in part as follows:[59] 'You are sent by the King and his seven counsellors[60] to find out how things stand in Judah and Jerusalem with regard to the law of your God with which you are

[55] See HZ I 294 ff.

[56] J. Neusner, 'The idea of purity in the Jewish Literature of the period of the Second Temple', Mon. H. S. Nyberg 2, Acta Iranica 5, 1975, 137. See further his The Mishnaic system of uncleanness, its context and history Leiden 1977; and on the development of the Jewish purity laws by the 'Yahweh-alonists', Morton Smith, op. cit., 100-2.

[57] For the arguments see Eissfeldt, Old Testament, 552-7; H. H. Rowley, The Servant of the Lord, 2nd ed., Oxford 1965, 135-68. Subsequently, for the year 458, Morton Smith, 'Palestinian Judaism in the Persian period' in Bengtson (ed.), Greeks and Persians, 391-2; Palestinian Parties and Politics, 119-27; for the year 398, K. Galling, Studien zur Geschichte Israels, 158-83; P. Ackroyd, Israel under Babylon and Persia, 191-6.

[58] Ezra. VII. 12, see H. H. Schaeder, 'Esra der Schreiber', Beiträge zur historischen Theologie 5, Tübingen 1930 (repr. in his Studien zur orientalischen Religionsgeschichte, ed. C. Colpe, Darmstadt 1968, 203-23).

[59] Ezra VII.11-26.

[60] On these 'seven counsellors' see above, p. 94 with n. 28.

entrusted. You are also to convey the silver and gold which the King and his counsellors have freely offered to the God of Israel whose dwelling is in Jerusalem ... In pursuance of this decree you shall use the money solely for the purchase of bulls, rams and lambs, and the proper grain-offerings and drink-offerings, to be offered on the altar in the house of your God in Jerusalem ... The vessels which have been given you for the service of the house of your God you shall hand over to the God of Jerusalem; and if anything else should be required for the house of your God, which it may fall to you to provide, you may provide it out of the King's Treasury. And I, King Artaxerxes, issue an order to all treasurers in the province of Beyond-Euphrates that whatever is demanded of you by Ezra the priest, a scribe learned in the law of the God of heaven, is to be supplied exactly, up to a hundred talents of silver, a hundred kor of wheat, a hundred bath of wine, a hundred bath of oil, and salt without reckoning. Whatever is demanded by the God of heaven, let it be diligently carried out for the house of the God of heaven; otherwise wrath may fall upon the realm of the King and his sons. We also make known to you that you have no authority to impose general levy, poll-tax or land-tax on any of the priests, Levites, musicians, doorkeepers, temple-servitors or other servants of this house of God'. The terminology 'the house of your God in Jerusalem' reflects that of the edict of Cyrus; and the privileges granted to the priests and other servants of the temple in Jerusalem resemble those granted by Cyrus to the priests of the Apollo-shrine in Asia Minor.[61]

iii) *The Priestly Code and Zoroastrian influences*

Jewish tradition honoured Ezra, called also 'a scribe learned in the law of Moses',[62] by attributing to him the writing down of all the canonical books of the Old Testament,[63] while many modern scholars associate him specifically with the 'Priestly Code', the fourth strand in the Pentateuch whose compilation is ascribed largely to the Persian period. This he is thought either to have edited himself, or at least to have imposed at this time on the Jewish community.[64] Although it is accepted that all parts of the Pentateuch contain both pre-exilic and post-exilic materials, the latter appear most abundantly in the 'Priestly Code'; and it is here, not surprisingly, that Zoroastrian influences seem apparent.

[61] See above, pp. 47-8.

[62] Ezra VII.6.

[63] See Eissfeldt, op. cit., 563-4.

[64] See ibid., 188-9, 204-8; C. R. North, 'Pentateuchal Criticism', The Old Testament and Modern Study, ed. H. H. Rowley, Oxford 1951, 48-82.

To it is assigned the 'Holiness Code' (Leviticus XVIII-XXVI), which, though wholly Jewish, may owe its place and something of its emphases to the deepening interest in matters of purity. To it also belongs the first chapter of the Book of Genesis, which gives an account of creation wholly different from that in the second chapter, with its story of the garden of Eden.[65] The first account resembles the Zoroastrian cosmogony in two striking particulars. First there is the great declaration: 'In the beginning God (Elohim) created the heaven and the earth ... And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters'. This is the only place in the Old Testament where the Spirit of God is associated with creativity; and attempts have been made accordingly to give *rūᵃh* a special meaning here, such as wind or storm; but a recent commentator insists that 'to use modern terms, the Spirit is the active principle, which was wholly necessary in order to accomplish a creation. It was ... the driving factor ... Where God was, there too his Spirit was at work'.[66] It is precisely in such terms that scholars have sought to define Zoroaster's teachings about the Holy Spirit through which Ahuramazda is 'Creator of all things'.[67]

Then there is the division of the acts of creation into seven stages. The Zoroastrian and Biblical stages are not identical, and in particular the creation of fire, which is the culmination of the Zoroastrian creation story, is given a less conspicuous place in Genesis, with the luminaries being set between the plants and the birds and fishes. Yet there is a broad likeness between the two cosmogonies; and since cosmogony was of fundamental importance in the teachings of Zoroaster, being linked with his doctrines concerning the seven great Ameša Spentas and God's purpose in creating the world, it can be expected that knowledge of the Zoroastrian account would have become known to theologians of other faiths throughout the empire.

As prominent in Zoroastrianism, because vitally important for each believer, were the Gathic teachings about fate after death (with individual judgment, heaven and hell), and at the last day (with the Last Judgment, and annihilation for the wicked but eternal bliss for the saved in company with Ahuramazda in his kingdom to come upon earth).[68] The contrast is sharp between these beliefs and the oldest layer of Jewish ones concerning the hereafter, of which it has been said: 'One of

[65] More precisely Gen. I.1-II.4a; II.4b ff.
[66] A. S. Kapelrud, 'Die Theologie der Schöpfung im Alten Testament', Zeitschrift f. alttestamentliche Wissenschaft 91, 1979, 165-6.
[67] Y 44.7; cf. Y 51.7. On the Holy Spirit see Lommel, Rel., 18 ff., and HZ I 193, 211, 221.
[68] See HZ I 235 ff.

the most astonishing things about Israel's religious faith is the warmth and intensity of fellowship with God which was experienced against the sombre background of a belief in nothing but the most shadowy and unsatisfactory kind of survival after death. In Amos (Ch. 9) and Psalm 139 we find the belief that Yahweh's writ extended even to the underworld of Sheol, but there is little evidence till the end of the Old Testament period that there was any belief in a blessed existence after death'.[69] The earliest reference to such a belief has been seen in what is regarded as a post-exilic verse, Isaiah 26.19: 'But thy dead live, their bodies will rise again. They that sleep in the earth will awake and shout for joy; for ... the earth will bring those long dead to birth again'. The new hope of joy in the hereafter was thus expressly linked with the characteristic Zoroastrian doctrine of the resurrection of the dead, alluded to, it seems, in Y. 30.7, and constantly reiterated as an article of faith.[70] The teaching was duly ascribed to Zoroaster by Theopompos, who was born about 380, in the reign of Artaxerxes II.[71] Since it and the other elements of Zoroastrian apocalyptic find their counterparts eventually in Jewish and Christian eschatology, not disjointedly but as parts of that same fixed scheme which is to be discerned in the Gathas, it is difficult not to concede to Zoroastrianism both priority and influence; the more especially since elements of Zoroaster's teachings can be traced far back in the ancient Indo-Iranian religious tradition,[72] whereas those of Jewish apocalyptic first appear after the time of contact with the Persian faith.

A doctrine which appears to be wholly original to Zoroaster was that at the end of 'limited time' death will cease, together with its evil creator, Anra Mainyu. This doctrine too was alien to ancient Jewish thought; but it finds expression in another late verse in Isaiah, which prophesies that 'on that day' Yahweh will destroy death, 'that veil that shrouds all the peoples, the pall thrown over all the nations; he will swallow up death for ever' (Is. 25.7-8). In general it seems that Zoroastrian teachings, first assimilated by Second Isaiah with his proclamation of Yahweh as God and Creator, were adopted also by other prophets of the Isaianic school and make sporadic appearance in their verses, although not yet as part of an integrated system of belief. The dating of many of those verses remains controversial, and with regard to the section made up of Chapters 24-27 (from which both the above citations come) 'from the exile down to the end of the Old Testament development, i.e. the end of

[69] N. W. Porteous, 'The Theology of the Old Testament', Peake's Commentary, 159.
[70] See HZ I 235-6.
[71] Apud Aeneas of Gaza, see Clemen, Fontes, 95; F.-P., 109.
[72] See HZ I 110 ff.

the second century B.C., every century has been proposed as the period of its composition'.[73] Problems attend also the dating of Chapters 56-66, which some scholars assign to a single author, Third Isaiah, living in the time of Artaxerxes I, while others apportion them to some dozen different members of the Isaianic school.[74] In these chapters past present and future are seen at times in ways which, although expressed in Jewish terms, bear striking resemblances in substance to the Zoroastrian world-picture. Thus both past and present are perceived as afflicted by evil, which not only injures man but blights the whole cosmos. Salvation from this state can come only through a mighty act of judgment by Yahweh, who will 'create new heavens and a new earth'. Then his servants 'shall shout in triumph in the gladness of their hearts', whereas those who did evil, and chose what was against his will, 'shall cry from sorrow and wail from anguish of spirit', and be given over to death.[75] The doctrine of a future lot depending on present choice is fundamental to Zoroaster's teachings, while the simultaneous announcement of happiness and misery, salvation for the righteous and suffering and annihilation for sinners, is strikingly characteristic of the Gathas but was new in Jewish utterances, although it became a prominent feature of later Jewish apocalyptic.

Although the Jews accepted the belief in heaven and hell, they rejected Zoroaster's fundamental dualistic teaching, that the power of God is limited in the present time by that of a mighty and evil Adversary, the source of all the wickedness and suffering in the world. Indeed Second Isaiah, perhaps the first Jew to have heard Zoroaster's doctrines, seems to have made this rejection explicit with the words: 'I am Yahweh, there is no other ... author alike of prosperity and trouble' (Is. 45.7).[76] He thus adopted the Zoroastrian belief in God the Creator, but attributed to Yahweh the creation of all things, evil as well as good, regarding him as all-powerful. As then Jews came widely to accept the doctrine that Yahweh was not simply the one Being whom they as a people should worship, that is, their tribal god, but rather God omnipotent, they found,

[73] Eissfeldt, Old Testament, 325.

[74] See ibid., 341 ff. (The fragmentation of the work was not, it seems, borne out by a statistical analysis, see Y. T. Radday, The Unity of Isaiah in the light of statistical linguistics, Hildesheim 1973.)

[75] See Is. 65, especially vv. 12, 14, 17. In this connection I am much indebted to Professor Norman Cohn for showing me the draft of a chapter on Zoroastrian influence on early Jewish apocalyptic from his own forthcoming work on ancient millenarianism.

[76] The Hebrew word rendered in the New English Bible as 'trouble' 'embraces both woe and evil', see C. Westermann, Isaiah 40-66, a commentary, English transl. by D. M. G. Stalker, London 1969, 162. The sentence has been the subject of prolonged discussion in connection with Zoroastrianism and Judaism, see (with an early bibliography) E. Stave, Über den Einfluss des Parsismus auf das Judentum, Haarlem 1898, 46 f.

it seems, an ever more urgent need to seek explanations, in the light of this doctrine, for undeserved suffering in the present life. 'The question as to why the godless so often prosper while the pious suffer was being repeatedly discussed ... in the fifth and fourth centuries B.C.' It is to this period that the Book of Job is by general assent attributed.[77]

Further, as the Jews came to venerate Yahweh as the all-powerful Creator, they appear to have felt an increasing need to acknowledge lesser immortal beings, his servants, who would bridge the vast gulf that now opened between him and his worshippers. The earliest reference to such a belief appears to be in Isaiah 24.21: 'the host of heaven in heaven'.[78] It is generally held that Jewish angelology, which became highly developed, reflects to a large extent Zoroastrian belief in the yazatas, with the 'seven angels that stand in the presence of God' (Rev. 8.2) corresponding to the Ameša Spentas themselves. A demonology also steadily evolved, until in the Jewish apocalyptic literature of the Parthian period Satan is conceived, like Anra Mainyu, as a cosmic force, an essentially evil being who leads his wicked hordes to trouble mankind. Zoroastrian dualism, consciously rejected, it seems, by Second Isaiah,[79] thus came in time to influence Judaism deeply.

An interesting historic parallel to these developments is furnished by the Parsis in respect to Christianity. Those devout Zoroastrians found themselves, like the Jews before them, a tiny minority in a vast empire. Like the Jews of the diaspora they were aliens in their chosen land, and they too came to be on excellent terms with its alien rulers, the British. Like the Jews they held staunchly to their own ancestral faith; but, unknown to themselves, they were deeply influenced nevertheless by Christianity, whose doctrines and observances, although never officially propagated, became familiar in countless random ways, and were in part unconsciously absorbed.

Democritus of Abdera

In 449 a peace was at last negotiated between Persia and Athens, known to the Greeks as the 'Peace of Callias'. This brought a respite in hostilities, and for a few years thereafter mainland Greeks could travel more freely through the Persian Empire. One who did so was the noted scholar Democritus from Abdera in Thrace, reputedly the author of more than seventy-two learned works. He visited Babylonia to study the

[77] Eissfeldt, op. cit., 467.

[78] See ibid., 325.

[79] See above, p. 120.

science of the 'Chaldeans'; and he is also said to have interested himself in the learning of the magi, and to have written on this. Indeed according to one tradition he had as a boy listened to the discourses of Ostanes, Xerxes' chief magus, when the Persian army halted at Abdera in 480, and had received inspiration from his words.[80]

Artaxerxes I and Babylonia

Babylonia, the richest of all the satrapies, was regularly governed by an Achaemenian from the time that Cambyses first ruled it as crown prince. Darius had built a palace in the ancient royal quarter of Babylon, and Xerxes lived there as satrap before he succeeded to the throne. Artaxerxes I also spent time in Babylonia, and was the first Achaemenian king, as far as is known, to take Babylonian ladies to wife. According to the Greek Ctesias (for seventeen years physician at the Persian court), his Queen of queens was a Persian, Damaspia, who bore him his oldest son and acknowledged heir, Xerxes II. Another son, Darius, was born to him by the Babylonian Cosmartidene; and by yet another Babylonian queen he had a daughter, Parysatis. A khvaetvadatha-marriage was arranged between Darius and Parysatis.[81]

There are numerous instances among the Achaemenians and Sasanians of kings taking foreign wives; and occasionally it is known that the wife kept her alien faith [82]—although plainly all would have had to observe the Zoroastrian purity laws. The admixture of foreign blood in the royal line could be ignored because of the widespread ancient belief (held by, among others, Aristotle) that woman was no more than a vessel into which man cast his seed. So the child of an Iranian male could be thought of as purely Iranian. (This belief persisted down to modern times in the Zoroastrian community, and not a single woman's name appears in the long genealogies of Parsi priests.) This conviction might seem to destroy the justification for khvaetvadatha-unions; but the basis for these was presumably in origin a desire to unite true believers, born of the same stock and with the same inheritance of faith and piety; [83] for however much the mother's physical role might be diminished, her capacity to mould a child's thoughts and habits had to be acknowledged. Thus in the light of subsequent developments it seems very probable that Artaxerxes' Babylonian queens maintained their

[80] On Democritus and the magi see Bidez-Cumont, Mages, I, 21, 57, 167.
[81] Ctesias, Persika, ed. F. W. König, §§ 44, 45.
[82] Notably the Christian Shirin, beloved queen of the Sasanian Khosrow II.
[83] See above, p. 76.

ancestral faith and observances, and that Darius and Parysatis saw their mothers in their private quarters making their devotions before images of great Ishtar, and so learnt from them to honour the goddess in this way, although as Persians they knew her cult as that of Anāhiti, Lady of the planet Venus. The likelihood that Artaxerxes would have tolerated such observances in his household is strengthened by the fact that he is recorded as having himself erected a stele to Ishtar in Babylon, as well as restoring property and estates to the priests of Marduk.[84]

[84] For references see Olmstead, Persian Empire, 291.

CHAPTER TWELVE

DARIUS II (423-404 B.C.)

Artaxerxes I died in 424, and his body, according to Ctesias,[1] was brought from Susa to Persepolis, where it was laid in a tomb at Naqš-i Rustam, beside those of Darius and Xerxes. The stereotyped reliefs were carved above and around the door; and within, as in the tomb of Xerxes, there was provision for three bodies, there being three vaults each with a single stone cist.[2] Ctesias' account indicates that one of these vaults was occupied by the body of Queen Damaspia, who died on the same day as her husband, and the other by that of their son Xerxes II, who was assassinated after a few weeks' reign by one of his half-brothers. Darius II was then in Babylon, where he succeeded in rallying support for himself. He marched eastward, deposed and put to death the assassin, and was crowned king in 423.

The inscriptions of Darius II

Unlike his forbears, the half-Babylonian Darius II appears to have preferred the plains to the Iranian plateau, favouring his capitals of Susa and Babylon. He added no further buildings at Persepolis, and the only inscriptions of his which are known are two short ones from column-bases in Susa. One of these contains a few lines derived from Darius the Great's inscription at Naqš-i Rustam, with the added words: 'Saith Dārayavahu the King: This palace Artakhšaṣa built, who was my father; this palace, by the will of Ahuramazda, I afterwards completed'.[3] The other is even briefer: 'This palace of stone, with its columns, Dārayavahu the Great King built; may Ahuramazda, with the gods, protect Dārayavahu the King'.[4] This inscription is in Old Persian only, the other in Old Persian and Akkadian.

Darius II in Babylonia and Egypt

Like his predecessors, Darius II records the erection of secular buildings only; but like them he seems to have been liberal towards the

[1] Ctesias § 45.
[2] See Schmidt, Persepolis III, 93-6 with Pls 48-55. Again, in the absence of an inscription the assignment of this particular tomb, Grave III, to Artaxerxes I is on the grounds of probability. P. Calmeyer attributes it rather to Darius II, and Grave IV to Artaxerxes I, see AMI VIII, 1975, 94-8, 110-2.
[3] D²Sb 3-4 (Kent, Old Persian, 154).
[4] D²Sa (ibid.).

temple-buildings of other peoples. Thus Babylonian records suggest that he contributed to repairs at the temple of Eanna in Uruk, and that he was 'in all probability responsible for the construction of the temple archives from which thousands of texts have been recovered'.[5]

The commercial life of Babylon in his reign is reflected in the records of the great financial house of Murašu (unearthed at Nippur in 1893), which cover the period 455 to 403.[6] These records were kept in Akkadian, written in cuneiform on clay tablets, though some bear filing notes in Aramaic, the spoken language then of Babylonia.[7] They show that the Persians kept the administration of Babylonia at its highest level in their own hands, but as long as tribute was paid interfered little in local affairs. They also bear witness to the astonishing mixture of peoples in Lower Mesopotamia at that time: Babylonians, Persians, Aramaeans, Jews, Egyptians, Lycians—indeed representatives from all lands of the Empire. There were also foreign garrisons (seemingly permanently stationed there and holding fiefs) from Armenia, India, Afghanistan, Asia Minor and Arabia.[8]

The Murašu archives contain records of administration of estates belonging to Queen Parysatis, Darius' sister-wife, one dating from the fourth year of his reign.[9]

Darius II was also (as far as is known) the first King of kings for sixty years to undertake any building in Egypt. There he added to Darius I's huge Amun-temple at El Khargeh; but this is thought to have been out of piety towards his great forbear and namesake rather than out of any real concern for the Egyptian cult.[10]

Darius II and the Jews

Darius II appears to have maintained his family tradition of active patronage towards the Jews. The evidence comes from a damaged scrap of Aramaic papyrus recovered from Elephantine.[11] According to this, in 419 the king sent an order to the Egyptian satrap Aršama (Arsames), which was transmitted by the Jew Hananiah. This order commanded the Jews of Elephantine to keep the Festival of Unleavened Bread in that

[5] M. Meauleau, 'Mesopotamia under Persian Rule', in Greeks and Persians (ed. Bengtson), 378.
[6] See G. Cardascia, Les archives des Murašū.
[7] See ibid., 19 ff., 25.
[8] Ibid., 6-7; M. Dandamaev, 'Politische und wirtschaftliche Geschichte', Beiträge z. Achämenidengeschichte (ed G. Walser), 56-8.
[9] Cardascia, op. cit., 78, 80, 95-6.
[10] See Kienitz, Politische Geschichte Ägyptens, 73-4.
[11] Cowley, Aram. Papyri, no. 21.

year for seven days. It was probably made, it is suggested, to ensure that the Egyptian authorities allowed the Jews time off to observe the feast;[12] and the fact that the Great King troubled himself in the matter suggests continuing good relations between leaders of the Jewish community and the court at Susa. When Nehemiah's governorship of Jerusalem ended is not known; but it has been pointed out that he had a brother named Hananiah.[13] The Hananiah of Darius' order appears in another Elephantine papyrus, as one whose sojourn among the Jews of Egypt was a memorable event for them.[14]

In the fourteenth year of Darius, in 408, while Aršama was absent from Egypt, the priests of the god Khnum in Elephantine, in collusion it seems with the Persian governor (*fratarāka*) of the fortress there, one Vidarnag , cut off the water-supply of the Jewish garrison and destroyed their temple to 'Yahu', which had stood since before the time of Cambyses.[15] This appears to have been an incident in one of the many Egyptian revolts against Persian rule, with the Jews, as foreigners in the service of foreigners, suffering in the course of it. The motives of Vidarnag (possibly the grandson of the man who built the **brazmadāna* in Elephantine during Xerxes' reign) are obscure. The Jews appealed to their brethren in Palestine for help to rebuild the temple, and also addressed themselves to Bagoas, the Persian governor of Judah at that time. He wrote to Aršama in Egypt, requesting him to have the temple 'rebuilt in its place, as it was formerly',[16] but this appears never to have been done.

The sons of Darius II

The oldest of the four sons of Darius and Parysatis was called (according to Ctesias) Arsicas. He was born to them when Darius was crown prince,[17] whereas their second son, known to history as Cyrus the Younger, was born after his father had ascended the throne. On this ground Parysatis, who favoured Cyrus, sought to persuade Darius, when he was dying, to recognize Cyrus as his heir, as Darius the Great had recognized his second son, Xerxes; but Parysatis had not the position of dynastic strength which Atossa, as daughter of Cyrus the Great, had enjoyed; and Arsicas was duly to succeed his father, taking the throne-name of his

[12] See (with bibliography) Kraeling, Brooklyn Aramaic Papyri, 92-6; Porten, Archives from Elephantine, 128-33.
[13] See Neh. I.2; Sachau, Aram. Papyrus.
[14] Cowley, op. cit., no. 38.
[15] See above, p. 74.
[16] See Cowley, op. cit., no. 31, 32; Kraeling, op. cit., 100-10; and on Bagoas further Galling, Studien, 149-65.
[17] See Plutarch, Life of Artaxerxes, II.

grandfather, Artaxerxes.[18] Plutarch characterizes the two brothers in the following terms: 'Cyrus, from his very earliest days, was high-strung and impetuous, but Artaxerxes seemed gentler in everything, and naturally milder in his impulses'.[19] Both were evidently trained not only in soldierly disciplines, but also in that 'Magian lore' which Artaxerxes I had commended to Themistocles. Plutarch speaks of a priest who had taught Cyrus 'the wisdom of the Magi', and has Cyrus claiming to be better versed in this than his brother.[20] Evidence from the Sasanian period suggests that this would have meant not only that the two princes were instructed in doctrine, but that they knew a considerable amount of Avestan by heart, as well as the ritual of certain observances.[21]

The promotion of the cult of Anāhiti/Anāhita

When eventually Artaxerxes came to succeed his father, Plutarch (relying on older sources) says that he underwent an inaugural ceremony, performed by Persian priests, at 'a sanctuary of a warlike goddess whom one might conjecture to be Athene'.[22] This goddess has been generally identified as the Persian divinity known to the Greeks as 'Anaitis'. Plutarch sets her temple at Pasargadae, but no traces of any such building have found there. It is possible, however, that this is simply a topographical mistake, made through a conflation of material, or present in the work of the often inaccurate Ctesias. If reliance can otherwise be placed on what Plutarch relates, then it would seem that when Artaxerxes succeeded to the throne there was already in existence somewhere in Persia proper, or perhaps Babylonia, a temple dedicated to 'Anaitis' and served by Persian magi.

Further, Tacitus records that in his own day the people of Hierocaesarea in Lydia claimed that they possessed a shrine 'dedicated in the reign of Cyrus to the Persian Diana',[23] while coins of Hierocaesarea in the Hellenic period bore the head of Diana with the legend 'Persikē'.[24] Despite Tacitus' use of the word 'reign' it seems probable that the shrine to this divinity was founded by Cyrus the Younger; for in 407, when he had just attained manhood (reckoned to be at the age of fifteen among the ancient Iranians), Darius appointed him satrap of Lydia and com-

[18] Xenophon, Anabasis, I.1.
[19] Op. cit., II.
[20] Ibid., III, VI.
[21] See Boyce, Zoroastrians, 137-9.
[22] Plutarch, op. cit., III. (On his sources see with references Clemen, Nachrichten, 87 with n. 1).
[23] Annals III.62; see Windischmann, Die persische Anahita, 98; Clemen, Fontes, 55.
[24] See Windischmann, loc. cit.

mander (*karanos*) of all the Persian troops in Asia Minor [25]—and the great Achaemenian satraps ruled virtually as vassal-kings over their domains.

Again, this 'Persian Diana' has been generally identified as Anaitis; and there is thus evidence (even if not of the most satisfactory kind) for the existence of at least two temples to this divinity existing under royal patronage in the reign of Darius II; and since it is clear (if only from his tomb-sculptures) that this ruler was a Zoroastrian like all the rest of his line, it seems reasonable to deduce that it was in his reign that the cult of Anāhiti/Ishtar, long known to the western Iranians, was regularized by being assimilated into the orthodox faith; and that it was he and his queen, familiar probably from infancy with Ishtar-statues venerated by their Babylonian mothers,[26] who first introduced an image-cult locally among western Zoroastrians. The way in which the worship of Anāhiti was made orthodox was to identify this being, goddess of the planet Venus, with the Avestan yazata *Harahvaiti, by origin the ancient Indo-Iranian goddess of the mythical river which is the source of all the waters of the world, who is therefore goddess also of fertility and procreation.[27] It would have been natural for a divinity of life-giving water to be much supplicated in Iran; and perhaps already by the fifth century B.C.*Harahvaiti's proper name had become neglected through her regular invocation by the cult-epithets *aredvi sūra anāhita* 'moist, mighty, pure'. If this was so, then there was an easy bridge for identifying the Avestan yazata called *anāhita* 'pure', with the western Iranian divinity called Anāhiti, 'the Pure One'. The bridge would moreover have been all the easier to use if by this period the final vowels of Old Persian were being dropped in common speech. Clearly a river goddess and a planetary divinity could never be fully identified, and even in the Sasanian period scholar priests tended to distinguish the former as 'Ardvisūr', and the latter as 'Anāhīd'. Nevertheless, a striking measure of identification was achieved in the cult. There is no reason to suppose that the ancient Iranian Anāhiti, goddess of the planet Venus, had any particular association with water, and no such association is attested for Ishtar-Inanna.[28]

[25] Xenophon, Anabasis, I.1.
[26] See above, pp. 196-7.
[27] See HZ I 71-4.
[28] See C. Wilcke, 'Inanna/Ishtar', Reallexicon d. Assyriologie u. Vorderasiatischer Archäologie V, 1976, 74-87. The ancient symbol of a flowing vase (associated in Sasanian sculpture with 'Anāhīd') was principally linked in Mesopotamia with Ea, lord of the watery deep, but was 'in no sense his symbol, or that of any particular god' (van Buren, Symbols of the gods, 133). Cult matters concerning Ishtar herself tend to become confused by the huge popularity of her worship in the ancient Near East, which led to other goddesses being assimilated to her concept.

In time, however, 'Anāhita' became prominently a water divinity, while Aredvi Sūra gained the cult-title of 'the Lady', a characteristic Mesopotamian usage unknown to the Avesta.[29] She also developed martial traits which can hardly have belonged to the original concept of a goddess of water and fertility, but which were prominent in the worship of the dual-natured Ishtar, goddess of love and war. So still in Sasanian times kings sent the skulls of conquered foes as trophies to the great shrine of 'Anāhīd' at Istakhr; [30] and Avestan verses addressed to Aši, who was yazata of Fortune and so linked with war, came to be incorporated in the Avestan hymn to Aredvi Sūra Anāhita.[31]

Even more strikingly, some new verses appear to have been composed and added to this hymn which celebrate the worship of the divinity through cult-images, such as stood presumably in the temple at Hierocaesarea, and the one entered by the young Artaxerxes II. The ancient concept of *Harahvaiti was of a mighty elemental being, swift in motion as a rushing river, clad appropriately in beaver-furs, and guiding a chariot drawn by the steeds of wind and rain and cloud and hail; [32] but late in the hymn there are verses which describe the yazata as standing in statuesque stillness, 'ever observed'; and then she is hailed as being dressed with royal magnificence in a golden embroidered robe, with golden crown, necklace and earrings, a golden breast-ornament, and gold-laced ankle-boots.[33] No cult-statues of Ishtar survive, but literary references show that there was an abundance of them in Mesopotamia and the adjacent lands; [34] and there are carvings which give an impression of how they would have appeared, showing her as a high-born lady, fittingly robed and adorned.[35] Further, an Old Babylonian inventory-text lists the clothing and ornaments of Ishtar of Lagaba (not apparently a major shrine), and these include a number of ornaments of gold and silver, such as are described in the Avestan verses, together with jewellery and changes of raiment.[36] It seems likely that cult-images set up by

[29] For some references see Boyce, 'Bibi Shahrbānū and the Lady of Pārs', BSOAS XXX, 1967, 36 ff.; R. Schmidt as cited in HZ I 74 n. 345 (although contra S. Wikander, 'BAPZOXAPA', Acta Orientalia XXXIV, 1972, 13-5).
[30] See Ṭabari, Geschichte der Perser und Araber zur Zeit der Sasaniden, ed. Th. Nöldeke, Leiden 1879, 17, cf. 4 n. 2.
[31] See HZ I 72-3.
[32] See Yt V 3, 7, 120, 129.
[33] Ibid., vv. 123, 126-8. The contrast between the two sets of verses was brought out by F. Windischmann, Die persische Anahita, 118-9, who was the first to suggest (in 1858) that the latter set was in honour of a cult-statue.
[34] See Wilcke, loc. cit. in n. 28, 78-9; U. Seidl, ibid., 87.
[35] See Seidl, ibid., 87-8 with illustrations.
[36] See W. F. Leemans, Ishtar of Lagaba and her dress, Leiden 1952, with (pp. 19-24) a general survey of texts concerning the jewellery and clothing of Ishtar-statues. Seidl, art. cit., 89, points

Darius and Parysatis were inspired by such Babylonian models; and a piece of evidence to support this assumption is provided by a fourth-century seal, thought to have been made for a Persian satrap in Asia Minor, which shows an Achaemenian king venerating a female divinity in a nimbus, who is standing on a lion's back. She is presumably 'Anāhita', represented thus in a manner traditional for Mesopotamian Ishtar.[37]

New Avestan verses could presumably have been composed in the fifth century B.C. by a learned poet-priest anywhere in the Zoroastrian community, as Latin was once composed by Christian scholars of every land. The enormous power of the Great King assured him of always finding some men ready to do his bidding, wherever he turned; but it seems most probable that the priests who complied with royal wishes by assimilating the Anāhiti cult were leading Persian magi who like the king himself were well acquainted with Babylon and its observances. Even they, however, were evidently unable simply to acknowledge Anāhiti, but had as Zoroastrians first to identify this powerful divinity with an Avestan yazata. By this identification the vital point was gained that the liturgical worship of Anāhiti now became possible for orthodox Zoroastrians through the use of the Avestan invocation of Aredvi Sūra Anāhita; for although incidental matter could still be composed in Avestan, not even the Great King's authority, it seems, could override the prohibition against introducing new divine names into the existing canon of holy texts. For some time, moreover, the new verses may have been recited only by western magi, in temples erected for 'Anāhita's' worship by Darius II and his sons.

Promotion of the cult of Tīri

There can be little doubt that the cult of Nabū-Tīri was adopted into orthodox Zoroastrianism at the same time as that of Ishtar-Anāhiti, with which it appears so closely linked, and that the adoption was brought about through the same royal pressure. It was accomplished, moreover, in the same way, with Tīri being identified with an Avestan yazata, in his case Tištrya. This identification was attended with even more awkwardness, since it meant that the divinity of the planet Mercury had to be regarded as the divinity also of the star Sirius; but at least both were stellar beings, the first syllables of their names were the same, and

out that attempts to identify various representations of naked women as Ishtar-images lack as yet any substantiation.

[37] See Minns, Scythians and Greeks, 410-11, with Fig. 298 (CR 1882-8); J. Boardman, Greek Gems and Finger Rings, London 1970, no. 878.

both heavenly bodies were connected with rain. The bringing of rain is the central theme of the Avestan hymn to Tištrya, while the Babylonians associated the planet Mercury with the coming of 'life-giving rain and flood'.[38] There were, moreover, ancient links in Babylonia between Sirius and Ishtar; for of old the Babylonian astronomers associated Sirius very closely with Spica, so that the two stars were represented by a single divinity, a goddess 'held to be a manifestation of Ishtar'.[39] (Down to the first century B.C. Babylonian star-lore was steeped in mythical concepts, although this went together with exact astronomical observations.[40]) Further, Spica (thus linked with Sirius) was especially the star of the sixth month, which was presided over by Ishtar.[41] The Persian magi, conferring with learned priests in Babylon, may thus have found multiple reasons for identifying Nabū-Tīri, lord of Mercury and the associate of Ishtar-Anāhiti, with Tištrya, lord of Sirius.

The identification permitted the veneration of Tīri through Avestan liturgies addressed to Tištrya; but it, like that of Anāhiti/*Harahvaiti, never gained full acceptance, either popularly or among priestly scholars. Indeed, for the latter it created more problems than the 'Anāhita' one, for there was no need for the planet Venus and the mythical world-river ever to be directly juxtaposed, whereas Mercury and Sirius were constantly coming together in astronomical and astrological texts. In time the Persian magi, having assimilated Babylonian lore about the planets, characterized these erratically moving bodies as daevic, exerting evil influences; and when they prepared a world-horoscope this showed that, as Ahriman made his original assault, Tīr rushed into the firmament and fell to striving with Teštar.[42] This then led some scholastics, annotating the texts *ad hoc*, to identify Tīr with Apōš (Avestan Apaoša), the demon of Drought who yearly fights with Teštar to prevent the coming of rain.[43] Other commentators, holding to the Achaemenian identification, stated firmly that 'Tīr is Teštar', and that 'Tīr is not Apōš';[44] and thus the contradictions remained unreconciled among the bookmen. It is unlikely, however, that they began seriously to trouble them before

[38] See HZ I 74-5; Kugler, Sternkunde, II 84 (cf. Eilers, Planetennamen, 51). For Avestan and Pahlavi passages concerning Tištrya and rain see M. P. Kharegat, 'The identity of some heavenly bodies mentioned in the Old Iranian writings', Sir J. J. Madressa Jubilee Volume (ed. J. J. Modi), Bombay 1914, 118-22.

[39] Kugler, op. cit., II 86.

[40] See ibid., II 11.

[41] Ibid., II 224-5.

[42] GBd. Va 3, see D. N. MacKenzie, 'Zoroastrian astrology in the Bundahišn', BSOAS XXVII, 1964, 515.

[43] GBd. Vb 12, see MacKenzie, art. cit., 520 with n. 46, and cf. HZ I 74.

[44] E.g. GBd. III.18, XXVI.108; Vb 12.

the Hellenistic age, and the development then of planetary horoscopy.[45] For serving priests the problems would hardly have arisen at any period; and to judge from the known practices of Sasanian and post-Sasanian times, they regularly introduced the Avestan liturgies to Tištrya with invocations in the vernacular to Tištrya and Tīri [46]—a usage presumably established in the late fifth century B.C. Tīri's festival, the *Tīrikāna, became accordingly associated with Tištrya (the religious services held on that day being dedicated to him); and in living usage, among the Irani Zoroastrians, it is commonly known as the 'Feast of Tīr and Teštar' [47] —a usage which suggests association rather than assimilation.

The assimilation of the cults of Anāhiti and Tīri was to produce considerable cultic and ecclesiastical developments in Zoroastrianism; but it appears to have been in the next reign that this assimilation was imposed on the Zoroastrian community as a whole. Presumably under Darius II it was restricted to local developments in Persia and among Persian colonists in the west.

Two more Irano-Lycian tombs

Throughout the reign of Darius II Athens and Sparta were locked in the Peloponnesian War (431-404); and echoes of the struggles of that time, as they affected parts of Asia Minor, are to be found in the inscriptions of the Xanthos Stele.[48] This, like the 'Harpy Tomb', stands at a corner of the ancient market-place of Xanthos; and it is a sepulchre of the same kind as the older monument, consisting of a three-stepped base, a square stone monolith over 4 m. (13 ft.) high, in whose top is a tomb-chamber, and a three-stepped capstone. On the capstone was set a massive rectangular block supporting the statue of a man enthroned, with an attendant or flanked by beasts—in all a most impressive monument. As in the 'Harpy Tomb' the outer walls of the tomb-chamber were adorned by sculptured slabs; and the interpretation of the reliefs is helped in this case by inscriptions carved on the stele beneath, two in Lycian with a somewhat halting Greek poem set between them. From these inscriptions it appears that the monument was that of one Khäräi (or Korris in the Greek text), son of a younger Harpagos. The first part of the main Lycian text tells, it seems, of Khäräi's victory over a force sent by Athens to exact tribute-money from Lycia, probably in 430/429. Subsequently

[45] See O. Neugebauer, The exact sciences in antiquity, 168 ff.
[46] See HZ I 75-6.
[47] See Boyce, Stronghold, 85, 207.
[48] See, with references and illustrations, Shahbazi, Irano-Lycian Monuments, Ch. II.

events are related from the time when Khäräi was fighting for the Persians under Tissaphernes, the satrap of Lydia. Tissaphernes' own name occurs in the text, as well as that of Darius and his crown-prince, Artaxerxes; but there is no mention of the younger Cyrus, so that the tomb can be reasonably assigned to before 410. How far it is justifiable to include it in a history of Zoroastrianism is however open to discussion. The general shape of the monument, like that of the 'Harpy Tomb', accords admirably with Zoroastrian needs and usages; and the religious references in the Greek text to Zeus and Athene, and the fact that Khäräi himself set the head of Athene on the obverse of most of his coins, are presumably no more than verbal and visual 'translations' of the names of beings of his own worship. But there is no means of establishing who these were—although the probability seems strong that the descendants of the elder Harpagos would have adhered, as a matter of family loyalty and dynastic pride, to the faith of the Iranians. Yet it can be argued that the fact that they did not use the written language of Iran, that is, Imperial Aramaic, but preferred the local Lycian, with some indifferently carved Greek, suggests that the dynasty had become more Lycian than Iranian, embracing perhaps therefore Lycian beliefs, and preserving the tomb-type of Cybernis as a matter of tradition only. The data at present seem inadequate for a firm conclusion.

Another impressive and costly sepulchre at Xanthos, the 'Nereid Monument' has been assigned to Khäräi's brother, Keriga.[49] This has a wholly different shape, being in the form of a small Ionic temple, set on the brow of a barren, rocky spur overlooking the main approach to Xanthos from the south. Again, however, there is a solid substructure formed of massive blocks of stone, on which the marble tomb, with portico and cella, was raised up, the cella or tomb-chamber being reached by a door in the west wall. The whole building was eventually tumbled into ruins by earthquakes; but the sculptured friezes have been largely reassembled, and have been dated on stylistic grounds to c. 410-400, while their subject matter makes an even closer dating seem possible, to between 411 and 407; for a seated figure has been identified as the satrap, Tissaphernes, and it is indeed suggested that the monument was built by Tissaphernes as a tomb for Keriga, who had led a Lycian force under his command. It cannot be doubted that Tissaphernes himself was a Zoroastrian; and the likelihood again seems that this solid stone structure, set on rock, was a tomb for a Zoroastrian prince. It derives its name, however, from the statues of nymphs in windblown draperies

[49] See ibid., Ch. III.

placed between the columns of the portico. These have been interpreted as the Nereids, since they stand upon sea-creatures—a water-bird, a crab, a fish or a dolphin. Their presence on a monument held to have been built by Tissaphernes, commander of the Persian fleet, is thought appropriate; but it is uncertain whether this was simply a decorative application of a theme from Greek mythology, or a use of a Greek visual concept to represent the Iranian yazatas of the Waters. The whole question of such possible visual 'interpretation' is a complex one, to which we must return in a later chapter.

The last years of Darius II's reign

From 412 Darius, at the instance of the able and politic Tissaphernes, gave support now to Athens, now to Sparta; but after Cyrus was appointed to replace Tissaphernes in 407 Persian aid was given entirely to Sparta, which finally defeated Athens in 404.

In that same year Darius fell fatally ill, and died in Babylonia. His body is thought to have been laid in the fourth and last of the royal tombs at Naqš-i Rustam, which was cut in the rock-face almost exactly opposite the Ka'ba-yi Zardušt. It, like the tomb attributed to his father, has three vaults, each with one burial cist; [50] but there is no indication as to who was laid in the third vault, and it was to be many years before Parysatis followed her husband to the grave.

[50] See Schmidt, Persepolis III, 96-9 with Pls 56-62, and cf. above, p. 198 n. 2.

CHAPTER THIRTEEN

ARTAXERXES II (404-358 B.C.)

A rite of royal initiation

His oldest son duly succeeded Darius, as the second Artaxerxes, to become the longest-reigning Achaemenian monarch; and soon after he had attained the throne, according to Plutarch, 'the new king made an expedition to Pasargadae, that he might receive the royal initiation at the hands of the Persian priests. Here there is a sanctuary of a warlike goddess whom one might conjecture to be Athene. Into this sanctuary the candidate for initiation must pass, and after laying aside his own proper robe, must put on that which Cyrus the Elder used to wear before he became king; then he must eat of a cake of figs, chew some turpentine-wood, and drink a cup of sour milk'.[1] It is wholly characteristic of Zoroastrian observance that three things should be ritually consumed, two from the vegetable and one from the animal kingdom. (Thus the second 'parahaoma' prepared at the yasna service, of which the laity may partake, consists of the juice of the haoma plant, crushed with pomegranate leaves and mixed with milk.) This ritual, recorded first of Artaxerxes but instituted most probably by Cambyses or Darius the Great,[2] powerfully suggests, with its intertwined political and religious connotations, the continuity of Achaemenian faith and rule.

The rebellion of Cyrus the Younger

On this particular occasion, Plutarch relates, Tissaphernes, the displaced satrap of Lydia, came to Artaxerxes just before the ceremony took place, in company with the priest who had been tutor to Cyrus, to warn the king that his brother was lurking to assassinate him as he unrobed. Artaxerxes had Cyrus seized and would have put him to death but for the entreaties of their mother, Parysatis, who prevailed upon him not only to spare his brother's life but to send him back to Lydia with the same powers as before. There he prepared an armed rebellion, and having enrolled both Persians and Greeks under his banner, marched eastward, and had almost reached Babylon before Artaxerxes met him at Cunaxa, in 401, where Cyrus was slain. Xenophon was present at

[1] Artaxerxes, III. On the temple see above, p. 201.
[2] See above, p. 90.

the battle, fighting as a gentleman adventurer for Cyrus, while the physician Ctesias tended the wounded on Artaxerxes' side.

Two funerary monuments

There is no record of how the body of Cyrus was disposed of, but it has been suggested that Parysatis, being allowed the charge of it, had it laid in a tomb which is a humbler replica of that of Cyrus the Great.[3] This stands in the upland valley of Buzpar in south-western Pars, not far from a point where a strategic pass cuts through the surrounding hills;[4] and it consists of a small gable-roofed stone chamber, raised on a three-tiered stone plinth. There is an inner roof, also of stone, and the low, narrow doorway, facing a few degrees west of north, was probably filled with a single stone slab, cemented in place. The tomb has no inscription and no ornament except for two small blind windows below the gable-ends, reminiscent of similar ones in the Zindan and Ka'ba, and perhaps intended symbolically for the passage of the soul.[5] The stones are fastened with metal clamps of a late type, which could accord with a fifth or fourth century date.[6]

Presumably, according to royal custom, the embalmed body was laid within this tomb; but Plutarch records that when Artaxerxes had Cyrus' Persian generals put to death, the bodies 'were torn by dogs and birds';[7] and this reference to the rite of exposure accords with the testimony of another funerary monument from this period. This is a rock-cut tomb found among some fifty others near the Lycian town of Limyra.[8] Most of these tombs have Lycian inscriptions; but this one, uniquely, has an Aramaic inscription over one of its doors, a Greek one over the other. The facade is carved to resemble the front of a wooden house, and the doorways lead into two small chambers, each with a rectangular pit cut into the rock floor. The inscriptions are damaged, but part of the Aramaic one has been read as follows: *'stwdnh znh 'rtym br 'rzpy 'bd* 'This ossuary (*astōdāna*) Artim son of Arzifiy made'.[9] The Greek, with some restored readings, runs: 'Artimas son of *Arziphius of Limyra, great-grandfather of Artimas of Corydalla, first constructed this tomb for

[3] See A. Shahbazi, 'The Achaemenid Tomb in Buzpar (Gur-i Dukhtar)', Bastan Chenassi va Honar-e Iran 9/10, 1972, 56. On the tomb see, with further bibliography, Stronach, Pasargadae, 300-2 with Pls 182-5.
[4] Stronach, loc. cit., 301.
[5] See Shahbazi, art. cit., 54; Stronach, op. cit., 301 n. 6; and cf. above, p. 173.
[6] See C. Nylander, 'Clamps and chronology', Iran. Ant. 6, 1966, 145; Stronach, op. cit., 302.
[7] Op. cit., XVIII.
[8] See Shahbazi, Irano-Lycian Monuments, 111-24.
[9] See, with bibliography, ibid., 114-6.

himself and his descendants'.[10] The cavities in the tomb chambers are too small to have received integral corpses; and this, together with the reference to the sepulchre having been used for four generations of the same family, shows that the term *astōdāna* was here applied in its precise sense of a 'place for bones', that is, for the disarticulated bones of the dead after exposure had taken place.

The oldest of the neighbouring Lycian tombs has been attributed to 450-370 B.C.; and a strong case has been made for dating the Persian one to some time after 400, on the grounds that the first Artimas was in all probability the noble whom Cyrus the Younger left to govern Lydia when he himself marched against Artaxerxes. After Cyrus' death Tissaphernes received back his appointments in Asia Minor, and those who had supported Cyrus then paid court to him. Artimas was presumably one of these, and possibly, having made his peace, was given some minor position at Limyra. His father Arziphius is thought to be the son of that name of Megabyzus, satrap of Syria, and Amytis, daughter of Xerxes.[11] If this is so, Artimas was related to the royal family; and once the rite of exposure had been adopted by Persians of such rank, it probably quickly became general.

This solitary ossuary among the Lycian tombs, used for generations by a Persian family, is a useful visual reminder of the fact that the Persians who were dispersed all over the Achaemenian Empire continued, wherever they were, to be practising Zoroastrians, just as the British in their imperial days continued to be practising Christians, leaving behind them in the same way a scattering of graves in foreign lands.

Xenophon on the Persians

The two books which Xenophon wrote concerning Persia are tantalizing in the meagreness of their allusions to religion, the one which is concerned directly with his own experiences, the Anabasis, being so largely taken up with the Greeks' homeward march after Cunaxa. The other, the Cyropaedia, written years later (probably around 365), contains a little more; for though it is a political romance, based on the legendary character of Cyrus the Great, Xenophon evidently drew for it on his own memories of the younger Cyrus and his Persian companions. Indeed, the character-sketch which he gives of the second Cyrus in the Anabasis closely matches that drawn of his great predecessor in the later book. This sketch suggests that (apart from being guilty of the Drauga-inspired sin of rebel-

[10] Ibid., 118-9.
[11] For these identifications see ibid., 121-4, and cf. above, p. 188.

lion) Cyrus the Younger was a worthy product of a strict Zoroastrian upbringing. Thus 'if he made a league or compact with any one, or gave a promise, he deemed it of the utmost importance not to break his word'.[12] He also, it seems, maintained an impartial justice of the kind which Darius the Great claimed for himself in his inscriptions;[13] for 'whenever any one did him a kindness or an injury, he showed himself anxious to go beyond him in those respects; ... no one could say with truth of him that he suffered the criminal or unjust to deride his authority, for he of all men inflicted punishment most unsparingly ... so that in Cyrus' dominions it was possible for any one, Greek or Barbarian, who did no wrong, to travel without fear whithersoever he pleased, and having with him whatever might suit his convenience'.[14] 'With regard to justice, if any appeared to him inclined to display that virtue, he made a point of making such men richer than those who sought to profit by injustice'.[15] He followed in this the Zoroastrian teaching that it is estimable to grow rich honestly, if one's riches are then used to help society and further what is good: 'If he noticed any one that was a skilful manager, with strict regard to justice, stocking the land of which he had the direction, and securing income from it, he would never take anything from such a person, but was ever ready to give him something in addition; so that men laboured with cheerfulness, acquired property with confidence, and made no concealment from Cyrus of what each possessed; for he did not appear to envy those who amassed riches openly, but to endeavour to bring into use the wealth of those who concealed it'.[16] He himself showed great liberality, and not only from his plenty. 'Whenever provender was scarce, but he himself ... was able to procure some, he would send it about'.[17] 'What occurred ... at the time of his death is a great proof, as well that he himself was a man of merit, as that he could accurately distinguish such as were trustworthy ... for when he was killed, all his friends, and the partakers of his table, who were with him, fell fighting in his defence'.[18]

In general, Xenophon says that the Persians of his day maintained the physical disciplines which had been recorded by Herodotus (whose observance was part of the Zoroastrian purity laws): they would neither spit

[12] Anabasis IX.7 (quoted in the translation of J. S. Watson, London 1896).
[13] See above, p. 121.
[14] Anab.IX.11, 13.
[15] Ibid., IX.16.
[16] Ibid., IX.19.
[17] Ibid., IX.27.
[18] Ibid., IX.30-1.

nor blow the nose, nor urinate, in public places, and still contented themselves with a single meal in the day. 'It was a national custom from the first not to eat and drink on the march, nor be seen satisfying the wants of nature'.[19] It was usage, he states, for all the sons of Persian nobles to be educated 'at the gates of the King', that is, at the court,[20] which meant a close-knit aristocracy with shared upbringing. Their education, he says, was pursued 'till the age of sixteen or seventeen',[21] which is probably an approximation to fifteen, the Iranian age of manhood. 'The boys', he states, 'go to school and give their time to learning justice and righteousness: they will tell you they come for that purpose, and the phrase is as natural with them as it is for us to speak of lads learning their letters'.[22] It is clear that writing played no part in the education of the Persian nobility at this period. Justice, according to Xenophon, was taught by oral precept, with training in judging particular cases. 'Further, the boys are instructed in temperance and self-restraint, and ... continence in meat and drink'.[23] They were also taught the management of weapons, and a Zoroastrian respect for physical hardihood, and for work on the land. In his Oeconomicus Xenophon records that Cyrus the Younger laboured on his estates in Asia Minor, planting fruit trees with his own hands; and that he declared to a Greek that 'I never dine before I have sweated at the performance of some military or agricultural labour, or always at least in the practice of some honourable pursuit'.[24]

Xenophon has the elder Cyrus trained also in the knowledge of taking omens from sacrifices, in order, his father tells him, 'that you might understand the counsels of the gods yourself and have no need of an interpreter'.[25] Elsewhere, however, Xenophon says that 'the Persians think it of more importance to follow the guidance of the learned [i.e. priests] in matters pertaining to the gods than in anything else whatever'.[26] The magi appear repeatedly in his pages, and accompany the armies as a matter of course. He attributes the establishment of their order to

[19] Cyropaedia I.2.16, VIII.8.8-11 (cited in the translation of H. G. Dakyns, London, Everyman's Library). Xenophon adds some cynical and evidently somewhat exaggerated comments on how these social laws were then made less onerous in the observance. On the single meal see I. 2. 8, 9,15, and cf. above, p. 168 with n. 29.
[20] Anab. IX.2.
[21] Cyrop.I.2.8.
[22] Ibid., I.2.6.
[23] Ibid., I.2.8.
[24] Oeconomicus IV.24 (Clemen, Fontes, 16, F.-P. 16).
[25] Cyrop. I.6.2.
[26] Ibid., VIII.3.11.

Cyrus the Great;[27] and it is possible that there is a genuine tradition here (brought down by the songs and stories which he says were still current about Cyrus in his own day[28]), telling of the establishing of Zoroastrian magi as the state priesthood after Cyrus' victory over Astyages.

In the field the elder Cyrus, Xenophon relates, always had his tent pitched facing east,[29] and this was presumably in fact the custom of Cyrus the Younger, so that he could say the morning prayers facing the rising sun, as Zoroastrian precept requires. Indeed, Xenophon says that 'always at break of day Cyrus chanted a hymn',[30] and the sonorous rendering of the obligatory Avestan prayers could well have sounded as such to Greek ears. He also says that the king sacrificed at each dawn to the gods whom the magi named.[31] Sacrifices are regularly spoken of; and Xenophon tells of a splendid sacrificial procession made by Cyrus the Great out of Babylon, to impress the people there. His detailed description was probably drawn from such a procession arranged by the younger Cyrus when he was gathering his forces in Asia Minor, and seeking to draw in all the allies that he could. The procession formed before sunrise. 'The Persians stood on the right, and the allies on the left ... At the head of the procession were led out the bulls for sacrifice, beautiful creatures, four and four together. They were to be offered to Zeus [i.e. Ahuramazda] and to any other gods that the Persian priests might name. ... After the oxen came horses, an offering to the Sun, then a white chariot with a golden yoke, hung with garlands and dedicated to Zeus, and after that the white car of the Sun, wreathed like the one before it, and then a third chariot, the horses of which were caparisoned with scarlet trappings, and behind walked men carrying fire in a mighty brazier. And then at last Cyrus himself was seen, coming forth from the gates in his chariot ... When the procession reached the sacred precincts, sacrifice was offered to Zeus, a whole burnt-offering of bulls, and a whole burnt-offering of horses to the Sun; and then they sacrificed to the Earth, slaying the victims as the Persian priests prescribed, and then to the heroes who hold the Syrian land. And when the rites were done Cyrus, seeing that the ground was suitable for racing, marked out a goal, and a course half-a-mile in length, and bade the cavalry and

[27] Ibid., VIII.1.23.
[28] Ibid., I.2.1, 3.15; cf. above, pp. 68-9.
[29] Ibid., VIII.5.3.
[30] Ibid., VIII.1.23.
[31] Loc. cit.

chariots match horses against each other, tribe by tribe'.[32] Making merry after an act of worship is characteristic of Zoroastrians, who hold that joyfulness pleases the divine beings; and the horse-racing would have filled in the time while the flesh from the sacrifices was being cooked for a feast (for which purpose, presumably, fire was carried in the great brazier).[33] Xenophon, it seems, like Herodotus, did not, as a non-Zoroastrian, witness the actual rite of sacrifice, and he appears inaccurate in speaking of 'whole burnt-offerings', since this has never been an Iranian observance. In living usage only a small ritual portion is offered to the fire, and the cooked meat is distributed to family, friends and the poor, or on festive occasions is eaten communally.[34] That such were the customs also in the past is suggested both by Herodotus' account of a private sacrifice, and by another incident related by Xenophon in the Cyropaedia (again with a vividness which suggests personal recollection): here so great a sacrifice was offered by the Median king that he 'sent a present of sacrificial meat to every regiment. There was flesh enough for three courses apiece or more'.[35]

Sacrifice was regularly offered, according to Xenophon, before battle. Thus before Cyrus the Great advanced from Media into Assyria, he sacrificed to 'Zeus the Lord and to the other gods in due order, and prayed "Look upon us with favour, and be gracious to us; guide our army, stand beside us in the battle, aid us in council, help us in action, be the comrades of the brave". Also he called upon the Heroes of Media, who dwell in the land to guard it'.[36] These 'Heroes' were presumably the fravašis. After victory, thank-offerings were invariably made. Thus on one occasion 'with the first faint gleam of morning Cyrus summoned the Persian priests, who are called magi, and bade them choose the offerings due to the gods for the blessings they had vouchsafed'.[37]

In his prayers Xenophon represents Cyrus as regularly invoking 'Zeus, the god of his fathers'.[38] When as a youth he left his father's home in Persia he has him praying 'to Hestia and Zeus', that is to the god of the hearth-fire, and to Ahuramazda,[39] while when in the end he 'assumed the title and manner that became a king', on entering the palace

[32] Ibid., VIII.3.10-13, 24-5.
[33] Greek *esxáras*, rendered by Dakyns as 'hearth'.
[34] See Boyce, Stronghold, 34, and index s.v. 'sacrifice'.
[35] Cyrop. II.2.2.
[36] Ibid., III.3.21.
[37] Ibid., IV.5.14; cf. IV.5.51; IV.6.11; V.3.4.
[38] Ibid., III.3.22; cf. II.4.19; V.1.29; VIII.7.3.
[39] Ibid., I.6.1.

at Babylon, he 'sacrificed to Hestia . . . and to Zeus the Lord, and to any other gods named by the Persian priests'.[40]

Nowhere does Xenophon make any direct mention of temple-worship by the Persians, although after Cyrus took Babylon he says that he 'summoned the Persian priests and told them the city was the captive of his spear and bade them set aside the first fruits of the booty as an offering to the gods and mark out land for sacred demesnes'.[41] Elsewhere (in a passage that probably owes something to Herodotus) he tells of Cyrus in old age taking victims and offering sacrifice 'to Zeus, the god of his fathers, and to the Sun, and all the other gods, on the high places where the Persians sacrifice'.[42]

Xenophon thus presents the older Cyrus as an observant Zoroastrian, calling chiefly upon Ahuramazda, but not forgetting the other divinities. His story indicates one ritual development, however, which seems in fact to have taken place between the reign of Xerxes and his own day. Whereas Herodotus knows of only one empty chariot drawn in ceremonial procession, that of Ahuramazda, Xenophon describes three. This seems a characteristic Zoroastrian triplication; but although Xenophon says that the second chariot was sacred to the Sun—presumably, that is, to Mithra—the divinity of the third chariot is not named. Had the procession that he tells of truly taken place in the sixth century B.C. one might have thought to assign it to Varuna 'the Baga', then so widely venerated by the Persians; but in the late fifth century the cumulative evidence suggests the probability rather that it was devoted to 'Anāhita'. A slight piece of direct evidence in favour of this is that its horses' trappings were of scarlet, a colour worn by those of the warrior-estate, and so appropriate to a divinity of war. The presence of such a chariot in a procession arranged by the younger Cyrus would seem to accord with the tradition which connects him with the temple of the 'Persian Diana' at Hierocaesarea.

Artaxerxes II and the cult of Anāhita

That the eldest son of Darius and Parysatis was also personally devoted to 'Anāhita' is shown by his own inscriptions. Like his father, this king left no inscriptions at Persepolis, and seems to have added nothing to the buildings on the terrace there; but four of his inscriptions survive from Susa, one of which runs as follows: 'Saith Artakhšaṣa the Great King,

[40] Ibid., VII.5.37, 57.
[41] Ibid., VII.5.35.
[42] Ibid., VIII.7.3.

King of kings, King of countries, King in this earth, son of Dārayavahu the King, of Dārayavahu son of Artakhšaṣa the King, of Artakhšaṣa son of Khšayāršan the King, of Khšayāršan son of Dārayavahu the King, of Dārayavahu son of Vištāspa, an Achaemenian: this palace Dārayavahu my great-great-grandfather built. Later under Artakhšaṣa my grandfather it was burned. By the will of Ahuramazda, Anāhita and Mithra I built this palace. May Ahuramazda, Anāhita and Mithra protect me from all evil, and that which I have built may they not shatter nor harm'.[43]

Down all the generations which Artaxerxes here names the Achaemenian kings had invoked in their inscriptions only Ahuramazda; and now he himself broke with this long-established tradition by calling also upon Mithra and Anāhita, whom he invokes again as a pair in two other surviving inscriptions.[44] With regard to Anāhita, this striking innovation has long been linked with a statement made concerning the Persians by the Babylonian priestly scholar Berossos in the third century B.C.:[45] 'After a long period of time they began to worship statues in human form, this practice having been introduced by Artaxerxes son of Darius . . ., who was the first to set up statues of Aphrodite Anaitis, at Babylon, Susa, Ecbatana, Persepolis, Bactra, Damascus and Sardis, thus suggesting to those communities the duty of worshipping them'.[46]

In the light of the evidence which suggests that Anāhita had been venerated also by Artaxerxes' brother Cyrus, the most probable explanation of these facts seems that Darius and Parysatis had established the new cult of Anāhita in only a few chapels or temples of their own foundation, and that now Artaxerxes took the further steps of proclaiming his devotion to this divinity more publicly, and of imposing her worship, with cult-statues, throughout the Zoroastrian community. Probably even in Persia proper there were already priests who, as orthodox traditionalists, had been deeply offended by the contrived recognition of Anāhiti, and by the development of image worship, so long resisted by the western Iranians; and the shock of these innovations is likely to have been greater still in Bactria, one of the ancient eastern strongholds of Zoroastrianism, where the faith had been established long before its

[43] A²Sa (Kent, Old Persian, 154).
[44] A²Sd 3-4, A²Ha 5 (Kent, op. cit., 155; on the variant spellings *anᵃhᵃtᵃ*, *anᵃhᵃitᵃ*, both capable of representing Anāhit(a), see ibid., 14-5 and 167 s.v.).
[45] See Windischmann, Die persische Anahita, 88. On Berossos, who probably composed his Babyloniaka (of which part of the third book was devoted to the Achaemenian kings) c. 290-80 B.C., see P. Schnabel, Berossos und die babylonisch-hellenistische Literatur, Leipzig-Berlin 1923.
[46] Bk III frg. 65. On details concerning the place-names see G. Hoffmann, Auszüge aus syrischen Akten persischer Märtyrer, Leipzig 1880 (repr. 1966), 137; Wikander, Feuerpriester, 65.

message reached Persia, and where there is no reason to suppose familiarity with the image-cults of other religions.

The role of Parysatis

Great determination and ruthlessness would seem therefore to have been needed to introduce generally the double innovation of sacred buildings and statues; for (to judge from parallels in later times) some believers may well have chosen to die rather than to adopt these new and to them abominable ways. It is hard therefore to see in this the achievement of Artaxerxes himself, the king whom Plutarch described as being of a natural mildness and dilatoriness;[47] and the prime mover appears much more likely to have been his mother, the formidable Parysatis, who lived long into his reign, had remarkable strength of character, and was relentless in the pursuit of her aims. She was moreover astute, and bent her undoubted talents to dominating her son—so much so that even when (according to Ctesias) she had had his beloved wife Statira poisoned, she 'was not further rebuked or harmed by Artaxerxes, except that he sent her off to Babylon, in accordance with her wish, saying that as long as she lived he himself would not see Babylon'.[48] But 'the king did not long persist in his wrath against his mother, but was reconciled with her and summoned her to court, since he saw that she had intellect and a lofty spirit worthy of a queen ... After this she consulted the king's pleasure in all things, and by approving of everything that he did, acquired influence with him and achieved all her ends'.[49] Ctesias (to judge from the fragments, and from Plutarch's 'Life') dwelt chiefly on Parysatis' vengefulness and cruelties; but the ardour and loyalty which appear in her love for her son Cyrus, and the determination with which she brought his enemies to agonising deaths, one by one, are qualities which in the religious sphere might well have shown themselves in a burning devotion to Ishtar-Anāhiti, and an unshakeable resolve to have her worship acknowledged by Zoroastrians everywhere, at whatever cost to the faith or lives of others.[50]

The advancement of Anāhita

Some indication of the wealth which the imperial family lavished on the new cult comes from after their downfall; for Polybius relates

[47] Artaxerxes II, IV.
[48] Ibid., XIX.
[49] Ibid., XXIII.
[50] That Parysatis played a role in Achaemenian religious life was apparently suggested by G. Husing, Porušātiš und das achämenidische Lehenswesen (Bausteine z. Geschichte, Völkerkunde u. Mythenkunde, Erg. Heft. 2, 1933), a work not accessible to me.

that in 209 B.C. the Seleucid Antiochus III despoiled the 'temple of Aine' at Ecbatana (presumed to be that of Anāhita), stripping it of its gold and silver bricks, its silver roof-tiles and the gold plating of its columns.[51] The temple thus appears to have had something of the opulence and splendour of an Achaemenian palace.[52] Even apart from these material splendours, the devotion of the dynasty to Anāhita is shown by the place Artaxerxes accords her in those of his inscriptions where her name appears directly after that of Ahuramazda, and before great Mithra's. Mithra's own cult had probably, as we have seen, been much advanced among the western Iranians; and in fact Artaxerxes invokes him alone in an inscription found at Ecbatana (Hamadan). This, slightly damaged, runs: 'This palace of stone, in its columns, Artakhšaṣa the Great King built, son of Dārayavahu the King, an Achaemenian. May Mithra protect me ...'.[53] Plutarch represents Artaxerxes as swearing by Mithra in daily life,[54] as does Xenophon his brother Cyrus.[55] In another of his own inscriptions Artaxerxes follows his family tradition in calling upon Ahuramazda alone: 'By the will of Ahuramazda I am king in this great earth far and wide; Ahuramazda bestowed the kingdom upon me. Me may Ahuramazda protect, and the kingdom which he bestowed upon me, and my royal house'.[56] In his invocations Artaxerxes thus names a triad of divinities, Ahuramazda, Mithra and Anāhita, who were to be prominent also in Sasanian worship, and who were indeed (with Tīri and Verethraghna) to remain the most popular of all the divine beings in western Iran; and it seems likely that it was through royal influence that Anāhita, as a water-divinity, usurped Varuna's place in the ancient Ahuric triad, so that the Baga, 'Son of the Waters', more venerated once than Mithra among the Persians, was gradually overshadowed, his ancient hymn forgotten, and his worship confined to the obligatory prayers and Avestan liturgies recited by priests.

A priestess of Anāhita

As we have seen, Anāhita had also the warlike aspect of Ishtar, which fitted her in yet another way to usurp Varuna's place (for as guardians of

[51] Polybius X.27.12.
[52] Lommel (Yāšts, 31) saw the description of the dwelling of Aredvi Sūra Anāhita in Yt V.101 as inspired by an Achaemenian palace, whereas C. Trever ('A propos des temples de la déesse Anahita en Iran sassanide', Iran. Ant. VII, 1967, 122) took it to be that of an Achaemenian Anāhita-temple.
[53] A²Hb (Kent, Old Persian, 155).
[54] Artaxerxes, IV.
[55] Oeconomicus IV.24.
[56] A²Hc 15-20 (Kent, loc. cit.).

ašaʃarta the Ahuras were martial beings). We have also seen that Anāhita-Nana was worshipped in Iran, locally at least, with what appear to be the rituals of the Ishtar-Dumuzi cult, which shows that she had Ishtar's other aspect of a divinity of love.[57] It is difficult, however, to evaluate what Plutarch has to tell of the fate of the lady Aspasia. This free-born woman had been in the harem of Cyrus the Younger, and had passed at his death into that of Artaxerxes. Later Artaxerxes' son Darius begged her from him as a boon, which his father reluctantly granted; 'but a little while after he had given her, he appointed her a priestess of the Artemis of Ecbatana, who bears the name of Anaitis, in order that she might remain chaste for the rest of her life'.[58] It is impossible (in the absence of contemporary Iranian evidence) to know the limits of what is implied here—whether, that is, all priestesses of Anāhita were required at this epoch to be chaste for life, or only certain among them. Celibacy is not in general a state respected by Zoroastrians, or regarded by them as meritorious.

A sanctuary of Spenta Ārmaiti?

Artaxerxes also deeply loved his daughter Atossa, and married both her and another daughter, Amestris, in khvaētvadatha-unions. Atossa was indeed 'so beloved of her father as his consort, that when her body was covered with leprosy he was not offended at this in the least, but offered prayers to Hera on her behalf, making his obeisance and clutching the earth before this goddess as he did before no other, while his satraps and friends, at his command, sent the goddess so many gifts that the sixteen furlongs between her sanctuary and the royal palace were filled with gold and silver and purple and horses'.[59] The Iranian yazata thus equated with Hera, the sister-consort of Zeus, seems almost certainly Spenta Ārmaiti, guardian of the earth on which the king knelt, and especial protector of women, who according to developed Zoroastrian teaching was the daughter-consort of Ahuramazda.[60] What the nature of a sanctuary for her might be, late in the reign of Artaxerxes II, remains a matter for conjecture.

The Anāhita temples and Artaxerxes' fame

Artaxerxes' close connection with the Anāhita temples is almost certainly the chief cause of this king's long-lasting fame among Zoroastrians, a fame which made it useful propaganda for the succeeding Arsacids to claim him (quite spuriously) for their ancestor; for there can be little doubt that Artaxerxes was regularly remembered down the centuries in the daily prayers said in these religious foundations of his, scattered far and wide across Zoroastrian lands.

[57] See above, p. 30 with nn. 99, 100.
[58] Artaxerxes, XXVII.
[59] Ibid., XXIII.
[60] Cf. Clemen, Nachrichten, 87 (although on 'Hera' in Xenophon, Cyropaedia, VIII.4.12, see ibid., 127).

The establishment of the temple cult of fire

Royal favour, and the material splendour of the Anāhita cult, with its magnificent temples and richly adorned statues, probably attracted many worshippers to the new shrines; and so consecrated buildings acquired a place in Zoroastrian devotional life. Probably it was not long before a number of the orthodox, forced to accept this, made a counter-move by founding other temples in which there was no man-made image, but instead a consecrated fire, the only icon permissable for a true follower of Zoroaster.[61] Clearly this momentous step could not have been taken without the king's assent, but there is no reason to suppose that this would have been unduly hard to win. The fact that recognition had been sought for the Anāhiti cult shows that the royal family were observant Zoroastrians, who wished to worship within the orthodox fold. The arguments for establishing a temple cult of fire were doubtless strong and persuasive in themselves; and the institution of such a cult would have helped to make temple worship more generally acceptable to the Zoroastrian community at large, and to assuage resentment. Plutarch shows, moreover, that Parysatis was a skilful diplomat, well able to make concessions once her own aims were achieved.

The scarcity of sources makes it impossible to follow the growth of the temple cult of fire during the remainder of the Achaemenian period; but references to fire temples after the downfall of the empire show that before this came about they had been founded very widely in both Iranian and non-Iranian satrapies (serving in the latter the local Persian community). They were moreover so firmly integrated by then into Zoroastrian devotional life that even in non-Iranian regions they were maintained by their expatriate and isolated congregations for many centuries. In these temples (to judge from the evidence of later times) the sacred fire was an ever-burning fire of wood, set in a raised stand or 'altar' of the Pasargadae type, which was placed within an inner sanctuary so that the purity of the fire could be strictly guarded by attendant

[61] See Boyce, 'On the Zoroastrian temple cult of fire', JAOS 95, 1975, 454-65. That the Zoroastrians did not develop a temple cult of fire before the 4th century B.C. was first suggested by S. Wikander, Feuerpriester.

priests. These priests served the temple fire with the traditional rites of the hearth fire—that is, with daily offerings of fuel and incense at the fixed times of prayer and with the regular offering also of an oblation from the animal sacrifice. A temple fire resembled the fire which had burned, it seems, in the palace of the King of kings from the time of Cyrus in that it was raised on a stand, put to no practical use, and consecrated by daily prayers; but now such a fire was installed in a public place, where any one of the faithful who was in a state of purity could attend to pray in its presence. The particular prayer to the fire itself, as it is still recited in fire temples, includes ancient Avestan verses addressed explicitly to the hearth fire, as well as Gathic ones in which Zoroaster himself invoked or spoke of fire.[62] It also contains a number of relatively late sections, having evidently been added to with pious intent down the years.

The 'Victorious Fires'

There is no Avestan term for a fire temple, but there appears to be a reference to a temple cult of fire in the Vendidad,[63] a composite work held to have been put together in the Parthian period. The earliest references in Zoroastrian literature to specific fires occur in the third century A.C., in the inscriptions of the Sasanian king Shabuhr I and his high priest Kirdēr. Kirdēr speaks of the foundation of 'Vahrām fires' (*ādur ī varahrān*), and other fires (*ādurān*) for which he has no distinctive name.[64] Later texts and usage show that by the end of the Sasanian period three categories of temple fires were recognised, of which the Vahrām-fire was the most revered and the most costly to establish and maintain. It is improbable that from the time of the inception of the temple cult there were these diverse categories, which appear more likely to have come into being through gradual elaboration; and if there was originally only the one category, then it seems reasonable to suppose that this was the Vahrām fire, since the temple cult of fire was presumably instituted in the fourth century B.C. with as much dignity and impressiveness as possible, in order to rival the magnificent image cult of Anāhita.

It is further probable (considering the immense conservatism of the faith) that the Middle Persian name derives from the original name given to the first temple fires of that epoch. In the post-Sasanian period this name was interpreted to mean 'Fire of Vahrām', that is, the fire be-

[62] See HZ I 154-5, 272.
[63] Vd VIII.81 ff.
[64] See, e.g., M. Back, Die sassanidischen Staatsinschriften, Acta Iranica 18, 1978, 388 ff.

longing to Verethraghna, yazata of Victory. This is clearly implied in the following passage from a ninth-century text: 'When by the great force of the Creator the beings of the invisible and visible worlds put on appearances...then the others by senses of the visible world can thus see him and the beings of the invisible world, just as when they see bodies in which the soul is, or when they see fires in which Vahrām is'.[65] This interpretation is reflected also in living popular belief, whereby locally in Iran the Ātaš Bahrām is venerated as 'Vahrām-Ized', i.e. the yazata Verethraghna;[66] and the same interpretation is given to the name by Parsi priestly scholars.[67]

In general, however, the name is simply used, without analysis; and no satisfactory reason has ever been suggested for a dedication of these great temple fires to the yazata of Victory. Fire has its own yazata, Ātar, and especial links with the Ameša Spenta Ašavahišta, and with Mithra; and the only direct association of Verethraghna with fire is that he, with Ātar, is a *hamkār* or associate of Aša, a fact for which a number of reasons can be suggested. In the liturgies which accompany the consecration of an Ātaš Bahrām, however, invocations of Verethraghna are wholly inconspicuous.[68] The likelihood therefore seems to be that when the temple cult was founded, the new temple fires were dignified by the Avestan epithet *verethraghan-* 'victorious', which in due course, as pronunciations changed, fell together with the substantive *verethraghna-* 'victory';[69] and since the latter was also the name of the immensely popular yazata of Victory, a confusion was natural. This confusion may well have arisen, however, only in Islamic times, with the erosion of Zoroastrian priestly learning. Moreover, Verethraghna came to be very much invoked then, as Vahrām/Bahrām Ized, since his aid was ardently sought by the oppressed and suffering community.[70]

In earlier usages of the Sasanian period the temple fires are linked rather with the abstract concept of victoriousness; indeed the regular idiom for installing such a fire was to establish it 'victoriously' (*pad varahrānīh*).[71] The idea of fire as actively overcoming cold and darkness has clearly ancient roots; and to this natural thought Zoroastrianism

[65] Dd. 30.5; transl. by H. W. Bailey, Zor. Problems, 112-3.
[66] See Boyce, Stronghold, 71-2.
[67] See Modi, CC, 219.
[68] See ibid., 210-11.
[69] This conclusion was reached by my student Miss Y. Yamamotu and myself together in the course of discussions in 1980 on her doctoral thesis on the Zoroastrian fire-cult.
[70] See Boyce, Stronghold, 70-1.
[71] See Boyce, 'On the sacred fires of the Zoroastrians', BSOAS XXXI, 1968, 61; 'The pious foundations of the Zoroastrians', ibid., 288-9.

added the concept of fire, 'strong through Aša', vanquishing spiritual and invisible foes. In the Younger Avesta Vohu Manah and Ātar together smite down the enmity of Anra Mainyu;[72] and in the great Gathic verse known as the *Kemnā Mazdā* (Y. 46.7), which is constantly uttered by Zoroastrians in their prayers, the prophet himself asks 'Whom hast thou appointed as my protector, O Mazda ... other than thy Fire and Vohu Manah?'

Further, it is very possible that those who established the first temple fires found an added reason for calling them 'victorious', in that they were setting up this orthodox cult in opposition to that of the warlike Anāhita, to whom the Achaemenian kings and princes probably addressed prayers for victory over foes. In Mesopotamian art Ishtar is regularly represented as carrying weapons. We have met her in a triumphant moment in the ancient Lullubi carving at Sar-i-Pul, holding captives of war in leash;[73] and there she has at her back two maces and a scimitar. In other carvings she has a bow and quivers, and a sword, and it is thus that she appeared in a dream to one of Assurbanipal's seers.[74] Apparently the Iranian Anāhita was conceived as similarly equipped, for later on the Kushan coins she appears, as Nanaia, armed with what looks like a sword or club.[75] In the light of these facts it seems significant that when a sacred fire is installed the priests who escort it to the sanctuary carry weapons, that is, maces and swords; and some of these ceremonial weapons are hung thereafter on the sanctuary walls, to symbolize the warrior-nature of the fire, and its unceasing fight against evil.[76] Such martial trappings had certainly no antecedent in the age-old cult of the hearth fire.

The founders of temple fires may also have made use of the concept of khvarenah to strengthen this new cult in the eyes of the king; for there was an ancient link between khvarenah and fire,[77] and the belief is explicitly stated in a Pahlavi text that 'the khvarenah which dwells in the Victorious Fire (*vahrām ātakhš*) battles with the invisible Drug'.[78]

[72] See Yt XIII.77-8.

[73] See above, p. 30.

[74] See U. Seidl, Reallexicon d. Assyriologie V, 1976, 87-8 with Abb.; LAR II 861.

[75] See A. Stein, Zoroastrian deities on Indo-Scythian coins, 12; British Museum Catalogue, Scythic Kings, Pls. XXVI.3, XXVII.5, XXVIII.8, XXIX.8. The inappropriateness of this weaponed guise for a river goddess is such that Windischmann, Die persische Anahita, 122-3, took it as proof that Nana was distinct from Anāhita (but see above, pp. 30-1). Clemen, Nachrichten, 133, sought rather to interpret the object in Nanaia's hand as a sceptre or the baresman—neither appropriate to the goddess. For further discussion and bibliography see B. N. Mukherjee, Nanā on Lion, a study in Kushan numismatic art, Calcutta 1969.

[76] See Modi, CC, 214; F. M. Kotwal apud Boyce, BSOAS XXXI, 52-3.

[77] See above, pp. 17 n. 23, 113-4.

[78] Zādspram III.82-3 (ed. B. T. Anklesaria, lxxxi, 41-2).

From this thought there could have been developed the belief that the khvarenah dwelling in the Victorious Fire helped to strengthen the royal khvarenah, and so bring about the defeat of the king's foes.

Although subsequent developments show that the temple cult of fire not only established itself quickly but became immensely strong, many centuries were to pass before Zoroastrian traditionalists succeeded in putting an end to the rival image cult. Indeed, the use of images in worship was only finally abolished, after a protracted struggle, late in the Sasanian epoch—that is, in the sixth century A.C., almost a millennium after Artaxerxes II first imposed it on the community.[79] Whether there were some who nurtured iconoclastic leanings throughout that long period, or whether hostility to images died down and was periodically rekindled, there is no means of knowing.

The remains of Achaemenian temples

Most of the great temples of Anāhita founded by Artaxerxes II were in cities which have continued to be inhabited, and no trace of them has yet been discovered. Archaeologists have indeed so far found only meagre remains of Achaemenian sacred buildings, at one or two abandoned sites. The first such to be unearthed were the foundations of a small temple at Susa, at some distance from the Achaemenian palaces there.[80] All traces of these foundations have since disappeared; but the excavator made out the ground-plan of a square courtyard, with narrow rooms opening off three sides, and on the fourth a raised and pillared portico. Behind this portico a doorway led into a small square room with flat roof. Four free-standing pillars at its centre presumably surrounded the cult object; and a corridor, which could be reached directly from the portico, ran round three sides of this sanctuary.

The only indication for the date of this building is as follows: a bell-shaped column-base was found at Susa which bears a brief inscription attributed to Artaxerxes II; and the column-bases in the little temple were similarly shaped. Hence the temple too has been assigned to the reign of that king. It has been pointed out, however, that these pillars might have been taken from the ruins of Artaxerxes' building at a later period—possibly even in Parthian times—and re-used for the temple.[81] Whatever its precise date, there is nothing to determine what cult

[79] See Boyce, 'Iconoclasm among the Zoroastrians', Studies for Morton Smith at sixty, ed. J. Neusner, Leiden 1965, Vol. IV, 93-111.

[80] See M. Dieulafoy, L'acropole de Suse, Paris 1893, 411 ff.; Erdmann, Feuerheiligtum, 75 n. 108; Schippmann, Feuerheiligtümer, 266-74.

[81] For bibliography and discussion see Schippmann, op. cit., 272-4.

object stood within its sanctuary, and the excavator himself was non-committal. Subsequently a firm identification was made of it as a sacred fire, but there is no direct evidence to support this. The only argument in its favour was that the ground-plan of the Susa building resembles that of more than one later Zoroastrian fire temple; [82] but this is hardly conclusive, since, with no Iranian tradition of sacred buildings, fire temple and image shrine are likely to have evolved from common prototypes, unless, indeed, the former derived directly from the latter.[83]

Another sacred building from the Achaemenian period has been excavated at Arinberd (ancient Erebuni) near Erivan. Here the old Urartian palace was adapted as a residence for a Persian satrap, and at some stage its chapel was converted (so the excavator deduced) into a fire temple. The lay-out of this temple was similar to that of the temple at Susa, but there was a screen-wall built across the forecourt, which was pierced by two doorways set off-centre in such a way that no sunlight could penetrate directly into the sanctuary.[84]

Another sacred building of this period is the so-called Frātadāra temple, discovered among the street-ruins of the city of Persepolis, to the north-west of the palace-terrace. The area was first explored in 1932, and a plan was drawn of a large building with a complex of halls and rooms, in one corner of which was a square room identified as the temple sanctuary.[85] In this there were the remains of four central pillars and a stepped stone pedestal. The sanctuary was separated by a long narrow room from a large hall with pillars down its length; and here more column-bases have since been excavated, whose shapes allow them to be assigned to the late Achaemenian period. A large stone block was also found there, with traces of a heavy metal dowel, such as might have been used to fix a statue in place.[86] It seems likely, therefore, that the building was an image shrine, very possibly dedicated to Anāhita; and perhaps the square room with its four pillars was a side chapel, with a different dedication. The temple continued in use in Seleucid times, and a Greek votive inscription was found there addressed to Zeus Megistos,

[82] E.g. the oldest temple on the Kuh-i Khwaja in Seistan, at one time regarded as an Achaemenian foundation but now generally assigned to the Parthian period, see Schippmann, op. cit., 57-70.

[83] On the origins and evolution of the Iranian buildings see Schippmann, op. cit., 482 ff.; M. A. R. Colledge, Parthian Art, London 1977, 42-5.

[84] Van Loon, Urartian Art, 48, citing K. L. Ohanesian, Raskopki urartskove goroda Erebuni (Excavations of the Urartian City E), Sovetskaa Arkheologia 1960, 289-96.

[85] For this ground-plan, made by Herzfeld, see Schmidt, Persepolis I 56; reproduced by Schippmann, op. cit., 179.

[86] Information from a private communication made in 1978 by the excavator, Dr A. B. Tilia, and kindly transmitted to me with her permission by Dr A. Shahbazi.

Apollo and Helios, Artemis and Athene.[87] It is probable that by Persians these divine names were understood as invocations of the Iranian Ahuramazda, Mithra and Anāhita. On the jambs of a stone window-frame from a house in an adjacent street two reliefs were discovered from the Hellenistic period, one of which shows a man holding the baresman; [88] and it was on the basis of this relief that the temple nearby was romantically named the Frātadāra temple (**frātadāra* being a wrongly reconstructed word thought to mean 'Keeper of the Fire'.) [89]

These three sites represent the only ruins of temples which are so far known from the Achaemenian period.

The terminology of the new temple cults

Since both the image shrine and the cult object which it sheltered were innovations in Zoroastrian worship, new names appear to have been coined for each. The evidence for this comes only from post-Achaemenian times; but the testimony of several Middle Iranian languages suggests that the term in general use for an image shrine was **bagina* 'place of a divinity (*baga*)',[90] while the image itself was called **uzdaēsa*, literally a 'showing forth, icon'.[91] This term appears to have been newly fashioned in contradistinction to Old Persian *patikāra*, literally 'counterfeit, reproduction', which was the word for an ordinary piece of sculpture; [92] and its coinage suggests the care and thought devoted by leading magi to the introduction of the image cult.

By contrast what appears to have been the name for the temple fire, *verethraghan- ātar-*, was created out of two common Avestan words; for this cult was not essentially new, but an extension of that of the hearth fire, and so could properly be named from the sacred language. The making of a special building to house a fire was, however, pure innovation, and no one term seems to have been established for the temple itself. A variety of expressions are used in Middle Persian, all of which mean simply 'House of Fire'. This plainness may indicate a desire on the part of the founders of temple fires to keep the cult as traditional as possible, with its building being simply the fire's own house, where the faithful could go, singly or together, to pray in its presence, as they were accustomed to

[87] See Herzfeld, Iran in the Ancient East, 275 (cited by Schippmann, op.cit., 178).

[88] See Herzfeld, op. cit., 286 (cited by Schippmann, loc. cit.); Schmidt, loc. cit.

[89] On this name (given by Herzfeld) see further in HZ III.

[90] See W. B. Henning, 'A Sogdian God', BSOAS XXVIII, 1965, 251-2 with n. 60.

[91] See Boyce, art. cit. in n. 79, 96-7 with n. 15.

[92] See M. Roaf, 'Texts about the sculptures and sculptors at Persepolis', Iran XVIII, 1980, 65-74, esp. 65-6 with n. 5.

pray before their hearth fires. The temple fires were thus an enrichment of the devotional life of the community, yet (being new) in no way essential to it. The prescribed prayers and offerings could still be made by each family within the home; and a local community could manage perfectly well without a fire temple, but not without a 'place of rites'. The two are by origin quite distinct, the latter having a long history within the Indo-Iranian community; and to this day their separation is marked by the fact that it is forbidden to perform any of the ancient rituals of the faith (other than those of the fire cult itself) in the presence or within sight of a temple fire. Nevertheless nowadays the 'place of rites' is regularly set within the temple precinct, for the convenience of the priests. There is no evidence to show when this junction first took place; but the fact that the Armenian term *mehean*, probably originally a name for a 'place of rites',[93] seems to have become generalized for a 'temple' at least by the Parthian period, suggests that the development is old.

The Parthian language preserves a word *āyazan* 'place of worship',[94] which is cognate with Old Persian *āyadana*, and whose forerunner in Old Parthian presumably meant similarly an appointed place for worship in the open air; but with the development of temple cults these words probably came to be used as general terms for a sacred building.

The priesthood and temple worship

The establishing of temple worship was clearly a step of great importance for the ecclesiastical development of Zoroastrianism; for these places not only provided a new focus for religious life, but also introduced a new category of priest. By tradition, the majority of priests at this and any other time would have been family priests, having hereditary links, that is, with particular lay families, performing their rituals, and living from the payments which they received for these services; and it was groups of such priests, one may assume, who made fraternal use of the local 'place of rites'. Nothing is known of any hierarchy at the early Achaemenian period. Possibly a chief priest such as the famed Ostanes was recognized as pre-eminent simply because he was priest to the King of kings himself;[95] and since such a position would normally descend within the one priestly family, its representative in each generation can be expected to have wielded great authority. Hermodoros, a disciple

[93] See above, pp. 185-6.

[94] See I. M. Diakonov and V. Livshits, Dokumenty iz Nisy, Moscow 1960, 15, 17, 43 and no. 1682; Benveniste, Titres et noms propres, 15.

[95] See HZ I 9-10.

of Plato, is cited as having given the names of several chief priests (Ostanes among them) whom he regarded as the successors of Zoroaster in 'ruling over the magi'.[96]

There must also have been scholar-priests, grouped perhaps in collegial associations and living in traditional manner from the offerings of their pupils, and probably also from gifts by the devout; and at a humbler level there were 'chantry' priests, such as those who dwelt by the tomb of Cyrus, offering daily prayers and sacrifices for the soul of the dead king. They and others like them evidently lived from endowments, which enabled them to perform their simple and monotonous duties from generation to generation. There were also probably hereditary guardians of natural shrines, such as that created by Xerxes at the foot of the noble plane tree in Asia Minor.

With the founding of sacred fires and image shrines a new class of priests was necessarily created, that of temple priests, who probably then as now lived partly from endowments and benefactions, partly from individual offerings by worshippers. The Iranian tendency for offices of all kinds to became hereditary operated also in their case, as is shown, for example, by an honorific inscription in Greek, put up in Sardis during the reign of Augustus to 'Theophron, hereditary priest of Anaitis Artemis of Asia'.[97] In Old Persian, the testimony of later times shows, such a priest would have been called a **baginapati* 'master of the place of a divinity'—a title whose Middle Iranian descendants occur right across the Zoroastrian world;[98] and it is possible that the chief priest of a fire temple would have been called **magupati* 'master of magi', since a number of priests are needed to tend and serve a great sacred fire. This title too is known only from its Middle Iranian descendants; in the Sasanian period it is used both for the chief priests of fire temples and for high priests generally.

The establishing of temple worship clearly had profound and far-reaching consequences for the faith. Till then Zoroastrianism, although rich in doctrine and observance, had made, it seems, relatively few material demands on its followers. Offerings to the hearth fire largely served a practical purpose, since they helped to sustain something which was needed in every home; and congregational worship, whether in

[96] See Diogenes Laertius 2.2 (Clemen, Fontes, 74, F.-P. 80). According to him, Hermodoros regarded each individual name as having been borne by several high priests, no doubt to fill out the concept of the 'Great Year', see below.

[97] See Darmesteter, ZA ii 365, and cf. Berossos, above, p. 217.

[98] I.e. Armenian *bagnpet*, MPers. *bašnbed*, Sogd. *faynpat*, Old Bactrian **bakanapati*, see W. B Henning, 'Soghdische Miszellen' BSOS VIII, 1936, 583-4, and art.cit. in n. 90, 250 with n. 49, 252 n. 60; Boyce, art. cit. in n. 79, p. 99.

high places or at the seasonal feasts, required no special buildings or separate order of priests. By contrast the new temples and their priests created a constant need for benefactions by the laity. New scope was given for the wealth of imperial Persia to be lavished on the faith; and some temples became in time great landowners and possessed of many chattels and slaves, while their chief priests wielded considerable power.[99]

There is no evidence from the Achaemenian period to show what was the relationship between the chief Persian magus and the chief priests of the various satrapies, or between such leading priests and the high priests of great temples; but events after the break-up of the Achaemenian empire suggest that the priesthood of each Iranian region maintained a considerable autonomy, while within each area high priest and chief temple priest presumably exercised each his own authority within his appointed sphere, like bishop and abbot in the Christian world. The training of priests' sons for the priesthood is bound to have remained a local matter, conducted through the local vernacular, with only a few individuals of exceptional ability going on to pursue doctrinal studies with distinguished teachers of more than regional fame. This may well have meant movement from west to east, as well as in the other direction, with some Persian and Median seekers after knowledge travelling to study the older traditions of the faith from eastern sages, and some eastern priestly scholars drawn to the west, with its wealth, imperial splendours and striking new developments in learning.

In eastern Iran the Avestan term *aēthrapati* appears to have continued current for a teacher of doctrine, with (to judge from later times) its use becoming extended, apparently in parallel to **magupati*, to mean a chief priest. The eastern Iranians seem also to have made use still of the ancient word *āthravan* for 'priest' (which appears in Pahlavi literature), although western Iranian *magu* must have become familiar at this period throughout the empire.[100] Modern scholars have often written as if the presence of magi in, for example, Syria or Asia Minor was due to independent migrations by flocks of such priests; but Zoroastrian priests and the laity are interdependent, and it is most unlikely that magi would have taken up residence in any non-Iranian land unless there were Persian laymen there before them—whether settlers, administrators or garrison-troops—who required religious services to be performed. It is

[99] Cf. Strabo's description, XII.3.37, of the wealth in the Parthian period of the temple at Zela.

[100] On attempts to see the title *āthravan* in Old Persian form in the Elamite tablets see above, pp. 135-7.

because Persian laymen were to be found in diverse capacities throughout the empire that Persian priests also appear to have been ubiquitous.

Zurvanism

As well as imposing the veneration of 'Anāhita' upon the Zoroastrian community at large, and so, it seems, being indirectly responsible for the founding of the temple cult of fire, Artaxerxes II may well have been instrumental in enabling Zurvanism to emerge as the dominant form of Zoroastrianism in western Iran; for although accounts of Zurvanite beliefs all come from later times, there is evidence to prove that this Zoroastrian heresy existed already in the late Achaemenian period.[101] The word 'zurvan' is an Avestan common noun meaning 'time', with all the ranges of significance possessed by the English word;[102] and it is relatively well attested, since concepts of time are of fundamental importance in Zoroastrianism. One of the most striking elements in Zoroaster's own teachings was his apparently wholly original doctrine that history would have an end, a doctrine which embodied the concept of three distinct times: the time of original cosmic separation of good and evil; the present limited time, embracing all human history, when good and evil are mixed together and contend in this created world; and a future time of perfect goodness, when evil will be no more, and the kingdom of God will be established on a newly perfected earth. In the Younger Avesta the first and third times are linked by the expression *zruvan akarana* 'boundless time' i.e. eternity; and the second time, called *zruvan dareghō-hvadhāta* 'time of long dominion' was seen as a segment of this eternity.[103] Another Younger Avestan term, especial perhaps to the theology of the faith, was *ǎfrasāhvant*, used of future bliss, and probably meaning literally 'not to be severed', that is, 'perpetual'.[104]

[101] That an Iranian divinity Zurvan exists only within this heresy has been the common opinion since the studies by Bidez-Cumont, Mages, I,64 ff. and F. Cumont, 'La fin du monde selon les mages occidentaux', RHR CIII, 1931, 56 ff.; but the idea that Zurvanism was a pre-Zoroastrian religion, which 'whatever may have been its place of origin, developed especially in the west of Iran' was put forward by E. Benveniste, The Persian religion, Ch. IV, and especially pp. 116-7, while Nyberg, Rel., argued that Zurvan was an ancient divinity of the western Iranians and specifically of the Median magi. This latter theory was adopted by G. Widengren and R. C. Zaehner; but no sound evidence has yet been adduced in its support. Their works, and especially Zaehner's Zurvan, were criticized on many points by U. Bianchi in his Zamān ī Ōhrmazd, a book which brings together admirably the Iranian and foreign literature concerning Zurvanism, and contains illuminating observations.—On attempts to see the name of the Iranian Zurvan in Hurrian tablets of the 14th century B.C., and in the Elamite tablets at Persepolis, see HZ I 14 n. 52, and above, pp. 140, 143.

[102] For an analysis of the usages of this common noun see H. Junker, Über iranische Quellen der hellenistischen Aion-Vorstellung, 129.

[103] See ibid., 127, 130-1.

[104] See J. Kellens, 'L'expression avestique de la perpétuité', IIJ 17, 1975, 211-5.

The basis of the Zurvanite heresy

These then were the ideas, Gathic in origin, which Zoroastrianism brought to the ancient Near East; and there they encountered, it seems, belief in an individual god of Time, which, as we have seen, has been traced back, perhaps as a local development of one aspect of Egyptian sun-worship, to Phoenicia in the seventh or sixth century B.C. This belief, adopted by Pherecydes, had become an element in Orphism, a religious movement which seems also to have owed certain debts in the first place to Zoroastrianism. There were clearly ample opportunities for contacts between western magi and Orphic seers, from Asia Minor to Babylon, throughout the Achaemenian period. There was also, well before the coming of Zoroastrianism, a general tendency towards monism among Near Eastern religions. The influences of these and other alien ideas led, it seems, some unknown magus, while pondering his own sacred texts, to evolve a new exegesis of the Gathic verse Y 30.3, with its declaration that there were 'two primal Spirits, twins . . .'. Fastening on the word 'twins'—used, it would seem, by the prophet as a metaphor for coevity—he argued that as twins the two Spirits, Ahuramazda and Anra Mainyu, must have had a father; and this father he postulated to be Time, Zurvan, the one original divine Being. In keeping with the earlier speculations about a god of Time, he evidently supposed that this solitary Being had generated offspring without a consort.[105]

It should, perhaps, be stressed that neither here, nor anywhere else in genuine Zoroastrian tradition, is there ever the smallest indication of doubt that the opposed Spirits of Zoroaster's teachings were Ahuramazda himself and his great Adversary. The attempt to understand them as Spenta Mainyu and Anra Mainyu, conceived as two distinct beings both emanating from Ahuramazda, was first made in modern times by European scholars seeking to interpret Zoroastrianism according to their own ideas of a desirable monism; and it is, in essence, an adaptation of Zurvanism—a heresy, that is, evolved by unbelievers from a heresy, and based like the original one on the wilful interpretation of a single Gathic verse. Zurvanism itself was clearly not just a new monism substituted for an earlier one, as these scholars would have it—there would have been no adequate spur for such a development—but a radical reinterpretation of Zoroaster's own ancient and well-defined dualism, which gave its unique character to the faith which he founded.[106]

[105] See above, pp. 150-2. Speculations about Zurvan's consort, found in works of the 5th century A.C., are clearly secondary. For these works see Zaehner, Zurvan, 60 ff., 420 ff.

[106] Cf. HZ I 193-4, and Lommel, Rel., 21-8. The matter was complicated when Parsi reformists, seeking a way to counter the attacks made by Christian missionaries on their traditional dualism, adopted this European heresy when it was brought to their attention in the latter part of the 19th century, see Boyce, Zoroastrians, 194-5, 197, 201, 202-3, 213. The reformists tended to write in English, whereas the orthodox used Gujarati; accordingly the voice of the latter went unheard by Western scholars, who by the early 20th century were regarding the European heresy, thus re-exported to them, as 'the Parsi tradition', see, e.g., Jackson, Zor. Studies, 71.

The development of Zurvanite myth and doctrine

How long it was before the first piece of theological speculation about Time, Zurvan, gained adherents and developed into a religious movement there is no means of knowing; but naturally the original thought gave scope for much further pondering among those magi who adopted it, with questions as to why and how Zurvan had engendered two sons, one good, one evil, and which of these two divinities now ruled the world. The later sources suggest that more than one answer was found to these problems, and probably Zurvanites were divided among themselves over such questions; but what is clear is that, like other heretics, they were convinced that it was they who now held the true key to Zoroaster's teachings, and this being so, they were concerned to spread their enlightenment among the faithful, not to break away and found a new religion.

Much of their doctrinal thinking must have been devoted accordingly to reconciling their belief in Zurvan with the established teachings and practices of the faith; and later accounts, although perhaps modified over the years, indicate how, mythologically, this was brought about. According to the main sources,[107] in the beginning only Zurvan existed. He sacrificed for a thousand years, baresman-twigs in hand, in order to have a son who would create the heavens and earth and all things therein. After this period he began to doubt whether his sacrifice was acceptable, and by that doubt Anra Mainyu was engendered, whereas Ahuramazda was conceived through the sacrifice. As Zurvan apprehended that there were two sons about to be born, he resolved to give the rulership of the world to the first to appear before him. This was the wicked Anra Mainyu. Faithful to his vow, Zurvan reluctantly gave him the kingship for a fixed period; but he bestowed the baresman on Ahuramazda, who was to be set over his brother; and after the fixed period Ahuramazda was to reign and accomplish all that he willed. Thereupon Ahuramazda set about the task of creation, and Anra Mainyu that of evil counter-creation.

A myth of this nature enabled the doctrine of Zurvan as the one eternal Being, uncreated and unbegotten, to be reconciled with orthodox Zoroastrian worship of Ahuramazda as Creator; and since it made of Zurvan a *deus otiosus*, who had entrusted power and activity to his

[107] I.e. the Armenian Eznik (who wrote c. 445-48 A.C.), the post-Sasanian Zoroastrian text Ulamā ī Islām, and the Arabic writer Shahrastāni.

sons, Zurvanites could pray together with the orthodox, using the traditional prayers directed to Ahuramazda; and so they could still call themselves Mazda-worshippers, and could share to a large extent the same beliefs and spiritual goals as the rest of the community.

Zurvanite fatalism and the concept of the 'Great Years'

Yet later texts show many Zurvanites to have been fatalists, acknowledging the inexorable decrees of Time, that is, the remote Zurvan; and it is thought that this fundamental element in their beliefs was inspired by Babylonian theories about astral fatalism, and the ever-returning cycle of the 'Great Years'.[108] These theories were developed after about 500 B.C., when the Babylonian astronomers established 'the zodiac of twelve times thirty degrees as a reference system for solar and planetary motion'.[109] Thereafter they were able to deduce from accumulated observations that the appearances of each planet are periodic and calculable; and that after a certain stretch of time all heavenly bodies return again to their former positions, and all heavenly phenomena repeat themselves exactly. The Babylonians still thought of the heavenly bodies as gods, who exerted direct and conscious influence on human affairs; and this belief led to the thought that since the stars and planets followed regular, recurrent patterns, so too must the events on earth which these divine beings controlled.[110] This led then to the theory of the 'Great Years'. Each 'Great Year' consisted of the time it took for all the heavenly bodies to accomplish the full cycle of their movements (usually reckoned from the time of arrival of the planets at the first of Aries until the time of their return to the end of Pisces, without difference in their longtitudes); and in every 'Great Year' all the events of the preceding 'Great Years' were thought to be exactly repeated, to infinity. 'To these mathematical-religious arguments were added two mythical concepts' [111]—those of the Flood, and of the Great Fire which consumes and purifies the world. Both these phenomena, like all other events, were thought of as recurring periodically. The concept of the Flood is Babylonian, that of the Great Fire, it is generally agreed, an adaptation of the Zoroastrian belief in the final purification of the world through fiery molten metal.[112] (The story of the Flood appears, awkwardly

[108] See B. L. van der Waerden, 'Das Grosse Jahr und die ewige Wiederkehr', Hermes 80, 1952, 129-55.
[109] Neugebauer, The exact sciences in antiquity, 103.
[110] Van der Waerden, art. cit., 138.
[111] Ibid.
[112] On this belief see HZ I 242; and on the spread of the idea of the molten fiery river, attested in numerous Gnostic and apocalyptic texts, see Cumont, 'La fin du monde . . .', RHR 104, 1931, 40-1.

adapted to the ancient myth of Yima, in the Zoroastrian Vendidad,[113] striking proof of the interaction of Iranian and Mesopotamian ideas.)

The Zurvanite millenary scheme

The concept of the recurring 'Great Year' can be widely traced in late antiquity, with hugely varying numbers of natural years ascribed to each 'Great Year'.[114] No Zoroastrian, while adhering in any way to his prophet's teachings, could accept the idea of a ceaseless repetition of mundane events; but the Zurvanites, it seems, adapted the concept of the 'Great Year' to the Avestan one of 'time of long dominion', *zruvan dareghō.hvadhāta*, the time, that is, of the existence of this physical world up to the Last Day. This time they saw as divided into millennia, during which there were to some extent recurring patterns of events; and this speculative scheme has been traced back to the time of Artaxerxes II through a citation by Plutarch from Theopompos, who wrote in that king's reign. Plutarch himself had been recounting the teachings of 'Zoroaster the Magus' concerning 'Horomazes and Areimanios', and he adds: 'And Theopompos says that, according to the magi, for three thousand years each of the two gods is alternately supreme and in subjection, and that during another period of three thousand years they fight and are at war, each upsetting the work of the other; but that in the end Hades is left behind, and mankind will be happy, neither needing food nor casting shadows; and that the god who brought this to pass is quiet and at rest for a time, on the whole not a long one for a god, but a reasonably long one for a man to sleep'.[115]

This citation not only establishes that Zoroastrian scholar priests had developed the millenary scheme by the first half of the fourth century B.C., but appears also to provide the earliest evidence for the existence of Zurvanism. An orthodox Zoroastrian would hardly have dignified Anra Mainyu with an appellation which could be rendered as 'god'; but Zurvanites could not deny the Hostile Spirit this honour, since he was held by them to be of the same begetting and birth as Ahuramazda. Moreover, the doctrine of a period of rule by Anra Mainyu is alien to the orthodox faith, but is part of Zurvanite teaching, with Zurvan, according to his vow, investing his first-born, evil son with the kingship before his brother.[116] Theopompos' words about mankind being happy and casting no shadow clearly refer to the future state of bliss, in 'boundless time',

[113] See HZ I 95.
[114] See Censorinus, De die natali Ch. 18, cited by Van der Waerden, art. cit., 133-4.
[115] Isis and Osiris 47 (Clemen, Fontes, 48, F.-P. 52),
[116] This point is strongly made by Benveniste, The Persian religion, 107-9.

zruvan akarana, with the righteous saved living in the infinite light of Ohrmazd, when 'shadows, which, being a form of darkness arise from Ahriman, will be banished for ever'.[117] (As we have seen, another citation from his works by Diogenes Laertius shows that Theopompos knew also of the Zoroastrian doctrine of the resurrection of the dead, and hence evidently of the Last Judgment.[118]) No surviving texts preserve Zurvanite doctrine with regard to the relationship between Zurvan and Ahuramazda in 'eternity to come'; and the final sentence of Plutarch's citation, about the god 'who has brought this to pass' (i.e. Ahuramazda) resting for a little, remains obscure.

The most Zurvanite of the surviving Pahlavi books, the Mēnōg ī Khrad, states that first Ohrmazd the Creator, with the blessing of Zurvān ī akanārag, 'Boundless Time', created the Ameša Spentas and this world, while Ahriman brought forth the devils;[119] and that it is only thereafter that the period of 9,000 years, as given by Theopompos, unfolds.[120] A fuller account in the Pahlavi Bundahišn[121] states that this time of creation, before the confrontation began, lasted 3,000 years, which makes a total for the Iranian 'Great Year' of 12,000 years, with twelve millennia corresponding to the twelve signs of the zodiac and the twelve months of the natural year.[122] The whole scheme appears to have been Zurvanite in origin, later somewhat awkwardly adapted to orthodox Zoroastrianism.[123]

Zurvan's quaternity

The Zurvanite 'Great Year' was thus sub-divided into four periods of 3,000 years each; and a connection has been sought between this and the fact that Zurvan was himself invoked as a quaternity. (A formal division of the natural year into four equal seasons, which might appear to offer a simpler explanation, was unknown to Iranian antiquity.) The fact of Zurvan's quaternity was established from the evidence of Manichaean Middle Persian texts of the third century A.C.;[124] and it has

[117] Benveniste, op. cit., 112; cf. Clemen, Nachrichten, 129.

[118] See above, p. 193.

[119] See, e.g., GBd. I, ed. and transl. by H. S. Nyberg, 'Questions de cosmogonie et de cosmologie mazdéennes, I', JA 1929, 207-29; Zaehner, Zurvan, 278-321.

[120] See Ch. 8, ed. and transl. by Nyberg, art. cit., 198-9, Zaehner, op. cit., 367-9.

[121] GBd. I.6, 4-5.

[122] See Nyberg, art. cit., II, JA 1931, 57-8.

[123] On the difficulties attendant on so adapting it see Benveniste, op. cit., 109-11. No parallel is known outside the Zoroastrian world for a 'Great Year' of 12,000 years, although Van der Waerden, art. cit., 149, suggests the possibility of some obscure connection with the 120,000 years of the Orphic 'Great Year'.

[124] See H. H. Schaeder, Urform und Fortbildungen des manichäischen Systems, Vorträge d. Bibliothek Warburg IV, 1924-1925, 138 ff.; Nyberg, JA 1931, 47 ff.

been suggested that this quaternity originated in the invocation of Zurvan by three cult epithets. These survive in Syriac texts as *ašōqar*, *frašōqar* and *zarōqar*, which have been analysed as corruptions of the Avestan adjectives *aršōkara*, *frašōkara*, and **zarōkara*, meaning 'who makes virile', 'who makes splendid' and 'who makes old'—epithets fitting for the yazata of Time, who presides over man's maturity, achievement and decay.[125] The first two occur in the Avesta as epithets of Verethraghna, yazata of Victory;[126] and they appear to have been borrowed from that powerful and popular divinity to enrich the new concept of the yazata of Time, with **zarōkara* probably a fresh coinage, modelled on the other two, as an epithet special to Zurvan.[127] (Elsewhere in what was presumably a late Avestan text, known only through a Pahlavi translation, Zurvan is described in terms used of the star-yazata Tištrya in his yašt.[128]) The three epithets became, it is thought, hypostatized, in characteristic Iranian fashion, and so Zurvan was regularly invoked with them as a quaternity; and Zurvanite theologians found numerous other sets of tetrads to represent him more subtlely.[129] All this suggests that there were Zurvanites who, despite their own mythology (as this is set out in later works), regarded their supreme god, not as a *deus otiosus*, but as a powerful divinity of fate and controller of destinies, to be propitiated and invoked. This indeed is suggested also by the existence of the proper name Zurvāndād 'Given by Zurvan',[130] for such names are usually bestowed on children who are conceived in answer to prayer. That Zurvan should have been regarded by some at least of his worshippers as a being endowed with present power seems inevitable from the linking of his cult with astral fatalism.

Zurvan in Avestan texts

It was to be looked for therefore that Zurvanites should have sought more positive acknowledgement of their deity than what could be seen as implied recognition in Yasna 30, and also some means whereby he could be worshipped with Avestan words; but though in one way this was easier than in the cases of Tīri and Anāhiti, because of the existence of the common noun *zruvan*, in other ways it was more difficult. Not

[125] See Nyberg, art. cit., 86-91; Rel., 382-3.

[126] Yt XIV.28.

[127] Otherwise Nyberg, loc. cit., who saw in these epithets proof that Zurvan was an ancient divinity.

[128] GBd. (ed. B.T. Anklesaria) III.2, cf. Yt VIII.13.

[129] See Nyberg, art. cit., II 108 ff.; Zaehner, op. cit., 210 ff., 223 ff., but with some over-ingenuity in discovering such tetrads, see S. M. Stern, W. B. Henning Mem. Vol., 413-5.

[130] See Justi, Namenbuch, 383-4.

only was it impossible to identify Zurvan with any other yazata, held as he was by his worshippers to be the sole eternal Being; but his worship was a grievous heresy which some at least among the orthodox appear to have opposed all down the centuries. For despite their orthopraxy and outward conformism, the Zurvanites by their theology betrayed Zoroaster's doctrines in fundamental ways. Thus they abandoned the prophet's essential belief in the utter separation, by origin as well as nature, of good and evil.[131] They also (being fatalists) laid less emphasis, it seems, on the primal necessity of choice between good and evil, as exemplified in the first choices made by Ahuramazda and his Adversary. Further, their doctrine that only Zurvan had always existed diminished the dignity of Ahuramazda, who had been proclaimed by Zoroaster to be the one eternal divine Being; and in due course the heretical concepts of Zurvanism, born of scholastic exegesis, gave rise to further speculations and to tedious and ignoble myths, whose elaborations can be traced in the later documents.

Yet despite these weaknesses, and despite orthodox hostility, the Zurvanite movement grew in strength; and in the end Zurvanite priests succeeded in having the name Zurvan, as that of a divine Being, introduced into Avestan liturgical texts, although not with the prominence which they doubtless sought. He appears there, appropriately, with stellar divinities and yazatas of the sky above. One passage is in the eighth section of the Khoršēd Niyāyeš, the prayer to the Sun (like almost all Younger Avestan texts, a composite work). Here, after Tištrya, lord of the star Sirius, and Vanant, lord of Vega,[132] there are venerated 'the sovereign Firmament' Thwāša hvadhāta; 'Boundless Time', Zruvan akarana; the 'good Vayu'; and 'Time of long dominion', Zruvan deregho-hvadhāta. Thwāša, meaning, it seems, 'Hastening, one who hastens', appears to have been a word newly applied to the concept of the firmament or sphere of the ecliptic, a concept which would have had no place in ancient Iranian thought;[133] and of this group of four divinities only Vayu appears to be a true Avestan yazata, with a traditional place in Zoroastrian worship. Zurvan was presumably linked with him for more than one reason. As the hypostasis of remorseless time, which in the end overcomes all things, he had a natural affinity with the equally remorseless Vayu, the 'all-conqueror', who as lord of the breath of life is also, through its extinction, lord of death. There was also a natural

[131] See HZ I 193-4.
[132] See HZ I 78.
[133] See Bartholomae, Air. Wb. 797; Zaehner, op. cit., 89.

connection to be found between wind and the stars, which are the instruments of Time's decrees, and so between Vayu and both Zurvan and Thwāsa.[134] The same grouping of divinities is to be found again in two sections of Vendidad XIX,[135] but there without 'Time of long dominion' being named after Vayu. Elsewhere in that same chapter of the Vendidad the Činvat Bridge has the epithet 'created by Zurvan',[136] presumably because it is the place to which Time brings all men at death.

The association of Zurvan with Thwāša, Time with the Firmament, has been set together with a statement attributed by Damascius to Eudemos of Rhodes (a pupil of Aristotle, who flourished in the decades immediately after the overthrow of the Achaemenian Empire). He, it seems, said that 'the magi . . . call the whole realm of the intelligible and unified in some cases Time, in others Place. This results in a distinction either between a good god and an evil daemon, or between light and darkness, according to some authorities. And the same theorists, after thus dividing the indivisible substance, make a twofold classification of the more important elements, and set Oromasdes over the one, and Arimanius over the other'.[137]

Evidence for the establishing of Zurvanism under the Achaemenians

As with what appear to be the new verses added to Yašt V in celebration of the image cult, so too with the brief Avestan passages in honour of Zurvan, there is no reason to suppose that these were generally recited by Zoroastrian priests before the Sasanian period, when the Sasanian kings, who were themselves Zurvanites, and their Zurvanite high priests established the canon of holy texts, and had it written down and made known to the whole community.[138] So brief indeed are the passages that they could even have composed and added as late as the Sasanian period itself. The cumulative evidence shows nevertheless that Zurvanism itself was already prominent in the fourth century B.C. Not only is there the witness of Theopompos and Eudemos, but there is the powerful testimony of the fact that it was Zurvanism, and not orthodox Zoroastrianism, which had a dominant influence on the Gnostic movements that arose in the Near East in Parthian times. Many of these shared the Zurvanite beliefs in a supreme *deus otiosus* and a lesser creator-god,

[134] On the ancient concept of Vayu see HZ I 79-80; and for the development in the Pahlavi literature of the link between Zurvan and Vayu see Zaehner, op. cit., 87 ff., 125 ff.
[135] Vd XIX.13, 16.
[136] Vd XIX.29.
[137] Clemen, Fontes, 95, F.-P. 107; see Darmesteter, ZA iii, lxix n. 3; Clemen, Nachrichten, 131-3.
[138] On evidence for the Zurvanism of the whole Sasanian dynasty (against Zaehner's theory of alternating Zurvanite and orthodox kings) see, briefly, Boyce, Zoroastrians, 112-3, 118-22.

beliefs which were adopted together with the older Zoroastrian teachings about the Three Times, the subordinate divinities who are emanations of the supreme God, and the struggle in this world between the principles of good and evil.[139] Zurvanism was also adopted in some eastern Iranian regions, and is attested among the Sogdians in the Sasanian epoch,[140] although the Parthians seem to have resisted the heresy.[141] For Zurvanism to have become so widespread it must have established itself strongly already in the Achaemenian period, when direct Persian influence was at its most extensive, and when Persian satraps and generals, with their priests and households, were in a position to disseminate beliefs held in Persia throughout the empire, causing them to take root and to manifest themselves long afterwards.

The Sasanians, who were Zurvanites, prided themselves, as Persians, on being heirs to Achaemenian tradition; and it seems probable that Zurvanism was part of this tradition, and that it was the later Achaemenians who first adopted the heresy, thus giving it its prestige. The further probability is, moreover, that it was Darius II and Parysatis who first embraced Zurvanism, with its Syro-Babylonian background and astrological character; and that there was a link between this and their devotion to the planetary cults of Anāhiti and Tīri. It seems reasonable, that is, to postulate the existence of a group of Persian magi in Babylon in the latter part of the fifth century B.C., followers of the magus who had evolved the original Zurvanite doctrine (based on the new exegesis of Y. 30.3), who concerned themselves with the study of Babylonian lore about the stars and planets, and who were conscious of attaining, in its light, new understanding (as they thought) of their own faith; and that these magi persuaded Darius and his wife (possibly during their impressionable young days) of the rightness of their views. A small piece of evidence for the broad chronology of this interpretation is that a Persian general of Darius II bore the name Spithradāta (Greek Spithradates) 'Given by the Firmament' (that is, by Thwāša, 'Spithra' being the Persian equivalent of this Avestan term).[142]

[139] See W. Bousset, Hauptprobleme der Gnosis, Göttingen 1907, 41 ff.

[140] See F. W. K. Müller-W. Lentz, Soghdische Texte II, SPAW XXI, 1934, 602 s.v. *zrw'*.

[141] The evidence comes from the Manichaean scriptures, which were translated into various Middle Iranian languages in the Sasanian period. The names of the Manichaean gods were also 'translated', partly in order to attract converts; but whereas the missionaries to the Persians and Sogdians made prominent use of Zurvan's name, texts rendered into Parthian are innocent of it. Despite this evidence, and the reasoned objections of other scholars, G. Widengren has persisted, in his various books on Zoroastrianism, in describing the Parthians as the chief upholders of Zurvanism.

[142] See Justi, Namenbuch, 310; Zaehner, Zurvan, 88 with n. 6.

This name, thus attested for the first time, was borne by several other noblemen in the later Achaemenian period.

Darius and Parysatis may then well have brought up their sons, not only to bestow special veneration on Anāhita and Tīri, but also to acknowledge Zurvan; and the incorporation of new verses in Yašt V, and of new divine names in Vendidad XIX, may all be part of the same religious movement, whose manifestations can first be traced in the reign of Artaxerxes II. Zurvanism apparently prospered then, becoming under royal patronage the dominant form of Zoroastrianism in western Iran, at least among the nobility and leading priests; and presumably the next king, Artaxerxes II's son and namesake, also grew up in this belief, and continued to support it naturally. (He was himself too markedly a man of action, with too much left him by his father to accomplish in the military and political spheres, to be likely to have made innovations of his own in matters of religion.)

The new religious developments in the later Achaemenian period can thus be seen as being all linked to an Iranian response to the intellectually exciting scientific advances made by Babylonian astronomers in the fifth century B.C., which proved an immense stimulus also to Greek and Indian thought. Some of the new Babylonian astronomical and astrological theories were evidently transmitted to India during the Achaemenian period, the Indus valley being part of the Persian empire;[143] and this suggests how widely they were then studied by scholar-priests. Their effect on Zoroastrian theology can hardly be considered beneficial; but they undoubtedly contributed greatly to the development of Zoroastrian scholastic learning, as this is manifested in the Pahlavi books.

The earlier purity of the orthodox faith

The question is sometimes asked whether, in the light of these striking innovations in the Achaemenian period, it is justifiable to suppose that down to that time the faith had been maintained in relative purity—whether, that is, there had been no other heterodox movements during the many previous centuries which are unknown to history, movements which may in subtle ways have earlier distorted Zoroaster's message. That there were minor developments certainly cannot be doubted; but broadly it is the faithfulness of Zoroastrianism to the essential teachings of the Gathas which is impressive. The Indo-Iranian religious tradition in general is characterized by tenacity; and Zoroaster, an heir to this

[143] See D. Pingree, 'Astronomy and astrology in India and Iran', Isis 54, 1963, 229-46.

tradition, gave it added strength for his own followers by his clear dogmatic theology. It was therefore a very strong faith which Persia accepted under Cyrus the Great; and four or five reigns passed, it seems, before one of her kings brought himself to introduce heterodox elements into it overtly. Further, the impulses which led to his doing so can be traced to the influence of Babylonian civilization, one of the greatest the world has known. There was no civilization with such impressive achievements for the eastern Iranians to encounter in the lands which they invaded; and the likelihood is that, strong not only in their own traditions but also in pride of conquest, they took nothing in the religious sphere from those whom they subdued; so that in fact Zoroastrianism appears to have remained essentially pure until Zurvanism and the cult of images were introduced by an absolute king. Even so in the long run, centuries later, the orthodox were able to overcome Zurvanism and to cast statues out of their places of worship, returning thus to an earlier purity of belief and practice which had probably never been wholly abandoned.

The three Saošyants or World-Saviours

One of the tasks which evidently occupied Zoroastrian scholastics after the new millenary scheme had been evolved was the working out of a world history with broadly recurrent patterns of events. The main elements in this history appear to have been established before the end of the Achaemenian period, and form part of the Iranian prophetic works as these became known in the Hellenistic age. From the purely religious point of view perhaps the most striking feature was the elaboration of the doctrine about the coming Saošyant or World-Saviour. The ancient hope had clearly been in the one Saviour, who is to be born of the prophet's seed (miraculously preserved in a lake) and a virgin mother, and who will appear at the end of the 'time of long dominion' to rally the forces of good and win the final battle over evil, after which the Last Judgment will take place.[144] This doctrine appears to have been prominent in Achaemenian times, and was one of the Zoroastrian teachings which had most influence on the subject peoples of the empire. Zoroastrian scholastics now elaborated it, filling out the millenary scheme with a characteristic triplication of the figure of the Saošyant. They set the birth of Zoroaster himself towards the end of the ninth millennium, so that he was held to have reached thirty years of age—the time of maturity and wisdom—in the year 9,000, when he made known his

[144] See HZ I 282 ff.

revelation. All three Saošyants were seen as being his sons by the identical miraculous process; and the first of them is to perform his healing work around the year 10,000, the second around the year 11,000, and the third around the year 12,000, when human history will have an end. It is the third and greatest of them who remains the Saošyant par excellence. His personal name, derived from a Gathic passage and probably shaped for him of old, was Astvat-ereta, 'He who embodies righteousness'; and the first and second Saošyants received names closely modelled on his: Ukhšyat-ereta 'He who makes righteousness grow', and Ukhšyat-nemah 'He who makes reverence grow'. These names are formed from common Avestan words; and the scholastics, convinced no doubt of the rightness of their perceptions, evidently felt justified in introducing them into Avestan texts. In the surviving Avesta the fravašis of these two beings are honoured after the fravaši of Astvat-ereta in Yašt XIII.[145]

Each of the three millennia which were held to compass human history since Zoroaster's revelation was thus ushered in by a Saviour—either by Zoroaster himself or by one of his sons; and in each was traced a parallel development, with a time of revelation, with its accompanying goodness and wisdom, being followed by a slow descent into ignorance and misery, before again a Saviour comes to redeem the world.[146] This recurring pattern of events within the 'time of long dominion' appears to be the Iranian adaptation of the Babylonian theory of recurrent events within the cycle of the 'Great Years'.

The creation of the Zoroastrian calendar

However long Zurvanism and its associated speculations had been maturing among the Persian magi in Babylon, it was Artaxerxes II, it seems, who forced open the door for these new doctrines, together with the cults of Anāhita and Tīri, to reach eastern Iran. His forty-five-year-long reign seems likely therefore to have seen many passionate religious disputations, which probably brought the leading priests of the different Iranian communities into unusually close contact, as they aligned themselves for or against the royally-favoured innovations; and one result of these contacts appears to have been the creation of a common devotional calendar, known generally as the 'Zoroastrian calendar'. The need for such a calendar, whereby all priests throughout the religious community could make the same liturgical invocations on the same days, and cele-

[145] Yt XIII.142. The scholastics also found names for the virgin mothers, see HZ I 285. For a different interpretation of the relationship of the three Saošyants see J. Kellens, 'Saošiiant-', Studia Iranica 3, 1974, 187-209.

[146] See in more detail HZ I 287 ff.

brate the holy days of the faith in strict conformity with one another, may also have come to be felt more strongly at this epoch with the establishment of public places of worship, especially since it seems likely that the new Anāhita temples, wherever they were founded, were served at first by Persian priests, who presumably found themselves using a different calendar from that of the local worshippers. This remains, however, necessarily speculative, since no pre-Zoroastrian Iranian calendar is known other than the Old Persian one.[147]

Even the Old Persian calendar is preserved only in the modified form in which it was used by the early Achaemenian kings, that is, with the Persian month-names substituted for Babylonian ones in the Babylonian luni-solar calendar of 360 days, in which periodic intercalations of a month were made to keep it in harmony with the seasons.[148] There is no contemporary evidence for the introduction into Iran of the 365-day Egyptian calendar in the Achaemenian period. On the contrary, Darius the Great is known to have introduced the Babylonian calendar into Egypt itself;[149] and incidental allusions to a 360-day year in Iran are found as late as the reign of Artaxerxes II.[150]

The last evidence for the use of the Babylonian calendar with Old Persian month-names by the Achaemenians comes from 458 B.C., that is, the seventh year of the reign of Artaxerxes I, after which the Elamite tablets cease. No dated Iranian documents survive from the remainder of the Achaemenian period; and the fact that the Zoroastrian calendar was created before the end of that epoch has to be inferred from its use thereafter, with only very minor variations, in a number of far-flung lands which had formerly been part of the Achaemenian empire. This calendar appears originally to have been in essence still the Babylonian one, with a year of 360 days divided into 12 months of 30 days each, with periodic intercalation; and the innovation consisted of naming each of the 30 days, and each of the 12 months, for a Zoroastrian yazata.[151]

[147] See above, p. 23.

[148] Several such intercalations have been traced in the dating of Persepolis tablets, see Cameron, PTT 34, and 'New tablets from the Persepolis Treasury', JNES 24, 1965, 181-2.

[149] See R. Parker, 'Persian and Egyptian chronology', AJSL 58, 1941, 285-301.

[150] I.e. Plutarch's statement that Artaxerxes II had 360 concubines (Life of Artaxerxes, XXVII); cf. Herodotus III.90 on the 360 white horses which were the annual gift of Cilicia to the Great King 'one for each day in the year'. These statements clearly carry more weight than that attributed to Curtius Rufus (Clemen, Fontes, 38, F.-P. 41), who wrote in the middle of the first century A.C.

[151] In the Sasanian period the Zoroastrian calendar had 365 days, with a month being intercalated in theory every 120 years; and the establishment of the calendar in this form was naturally attributed by the priests to Zoroaster himself. A number of Western scholars sought to reckon back from the Sasanian period, using the data of the hypothetical intercalations, in order to discover when the calendar had actually been introduced (see the summary of their researches by E. J. Bickerman, 'The "Zoroastrian" calendar', ArOr 35, 1967, 197-207). The last to do so was S. H. Taqizadeh, whose work on the Zoroastrian and other Iranian calendars remains of fundamental importance. However, all calculations based on the assumption of regular 120-year intercalations were shattered by the penetrating criticisms of Bickerman (art. cit.); and the present writer found evidence subsequently to show that the Zoroastrian calendar of 365 days was created by a Sasanian reform and had no older antecedents, the 360-day Zoroastrian calendar having remained in use, it seems, throughout the Parthian period. See her 'On the calendar of Zoroastrian feasts', BSOAS XXXIII, 1970, 513-39. The eventual adoption of the Egyptian style of reckoning by the Persians seems to have followed the introduction of the Julian calendar in the Roman world. For the re-calculations with reference to the 'Great Year' which accordingly became necessary see E. S. Kennedy and B. L. van der Waerden, 'The World-Year of the Persians', JAOS 83, 1963, 315-27.

The development appears thus to have been purely devotional in character, rather than an attempt at an improvement in time-reckoning; and the imperial chancellery would therefore have had no difficulty in using this new Zoroastrian calendar side by side with the Babylonian one in non-Iranian satrapies.[152]

The creation of a new calendar to be used throughout the Zoroastrian community, both in the new temples and ancient 'places of rites', was clearly a matter which affected every working priest, and was of primary importance to them all; and even without internal evidence to that effect, it would be reasonable to suppose that in order to bring it about a large convocation must have been held of leading priests from both east and west, with many months being spent in pondering and debate; and indeed the divine dedications which were finally chosen suggest a measure of compromise between the views of orthodox traditionalists and Zurvanite innovators, with agreement being reached only with difficulty.

The oldest (although undateable) testimony for the existence of the day dedications comes from Yasna 16, a section of the yasna liturgy which consists for the greater part of veneration of the yazatas of the 30 days, in their due order. Their names appear there in the following sequence:

1.	Dadvah Ahura Mazdā	9.	Ātar
2.	Vohu Manah	10.	Āpō
3.	Aša Vahišta	11.	Hvar
4.	Khšathra Vairya	12.	Māh
5.	Spenta Ārmaiti	13.	Tištrya
6.	Haurvatāt	14.	Geuš Urvan
7.	Ameretāt	15.	Dadvah Ahura Mazdā
8.	Dadvah Ahura Mazdā	16.	Mithra

[152] On the use of the Babylonian calendar under the later Achaemenian kings see, briefly, E. J. Bickerman, Chronology of the Ancient World, London 1968, 24-5. There is no evidence at any stage for calendar usages in the eastern satrapies at this epoch.

17. Sraoša
18. Rašnu
19. Fravašayō
20. Verethraghna
21. Rāman
22. Vāta
23. Dadvah Ahura Mazdā
24. Daēna
25. Aši
26. Arštāt
27. Asmān
28. Zam
29. Manthra Spenta
30. Anaghra Raočā̊

The dedications of the first seven days, to Ahuramazda himself and the six great Ameša Spentas, must have been acceptable to the orthodox and Zurvanites alike, and could have caused no dispute of any kind. Then, from nine to fourteen come dedications to 'nature' yazatas: Fire and the Waters, Sun and Moon, the star Tištrya and the Soul of the Ox, who is linked mythologically with the moon, and with the animal creation.[153] That these yazatas should have been chosen to follow so closely on the great heptad may have been a deliberate expression of Zoroastrian veneration for the physical world, created good by Ahuramazda—a veneration which Persian theologians were perhaps especially eager to emphasize at that time, against the pessimistic views of Orphics and Pythagoreans.

Great Mithra then stands in the sixteenth place, midway through the month; and he is followed by those yazatas closest to him, Sraoša and Rašnu, who with him judge men's souls at death. They have a natural link with the Fravašis, and with Verethraghna, god of Victory, who conquers the powers of evil. Rāman follows, representing (for some still obscure reason) great Vayu,[154] god of wind and the breath of life, and bringing after him the other wind god, Vāta. The last group, from twenty-four to thirty, is made up of female and more 'abstract' divinities: Religion, Recompense and Justice; Heaven, set here doubtless as the pair of female Earth, and finally Holy Invocation and Endless Light. (It is notable that there are no names in Yasna 16 which are suitable for the dedication of the five extra days which were later added to the Zoroastrian calendar by the Sasanian reform.)

There are several striking points, both positive and negative, about the invocations of Yasna 16. Thus the presence of only one star-yazata, Tištrya, the divinity who had been equated with Tīri, suggests a triumph for Persian innovators. (Other star-yazatas were important in Zoroastrian worship,[155] although since only Tištrya among them has a hymn

[153] See HZ I 150 with 139.
[154] See HZ I 80-1.
[155] See HZ I 77-8.

surviving in a good state of preservation, this fact is liable to be overlooked.) What is still more remarkable is the absence both of great Varuna and of the yazata who seems to have begun at this period to eclipse him in the west, Aredvi Sūra Anāhita; and the fact that neither received a dedication suggests a bitter contest here between traditionalists and innovators, which led to deadlock between them. This, when one considers the evident strength of the Anāhita cult, which enjoyed all the advantage of royal favour, is in itself a striking tribute to the united loyalty of the orthodox to Varuna, which apparently enabled them to resist all pressure to have him replaced in the calendar dedications by Anāhita. Equally the advocates of Anāhita seem to have been wholly unwilling to yield to Varuna the place which they sought for her.

The dedication which the orthodox appear to have desired for Varuna was that of the eighth day, immediately after the dedications to the great heptad, and equidistant between the other two Ahuras, Ahuramazda and Mithra. This would have been a place worthy of the dignity of the 'high Lord'; and it would also have suited his character, as divinity of water, to have stood at the head of a group of elemental divinities. Both considerations would also have made this dedication fitting, in the eyes of her advocates, for Anāhita, named by Artaxerxes II himself in his inscriptions between Ahuramazda and Mithra. Another yazata whose absence is striking is Haoma, a being of considerable importance and power—more so than Geuš Urvan, who like him is a cult divinity; and it seems very likely that at one stage in the calendar deliberations the dedication of the fifteenth day was proposed for him, immediately after Geuš Urvan and before Mithra (in whose Avestan hymn Haoma is conspicuous). Further, the yazata Dahmān Āfrīn, who is the hypostasis of the prayers of the faithful, was most probably originally assigned the twenty-third day, just before Daēna 'Religion'.

Both Haoma and Dahmān Āfrīn seem to have lost these dedications because of the solution found to break the deadlock over Varuna and Anāhita. This was to devote not one but four days in each month to Ahuramazda, in such a way that the thirty days were divided into four roughly equal parts. The inspiration for doing this may have come from the Babylonian usage of dividing the month into four periods by days with special names (the other days being simply numbered): *arhu*, the first, *sibutu*, the seventh, *šabattu*, the fifteenth, and *bubbulu*, the twenty-eighth. Three of the periods thus marked correspond closely with those of the Zoroastrian calendar marked by the dedications to Ahuramazda (all, in the Avestan text, explicitly to him as Creator). The

advantage of this solution seems that outwardly it was entirely orthodox, and no traditionalist could object to the piety of such dedications. The Creator was only and always Ahuramazda, even to the Zurvanites. Esoterically, however, it presumably gave deep satisfaction to the Zurvanites, since the fourfold dedication to Ahuramazda would have been a recurrent reminder to them of his remote fourfold 'father', Zurvan.[156]

Yet clearly neither party could be wholly satisfied with the solution, since to achieve it both had had to give up dedications which they had evidently desired; and both seem to have sought to gain their ends nevertheless by indirect means. So Varuna (under his regular Avestan invocation of the 'high Lord', Ahura berezant), Haoma and Dahmān Āfrīn together form what may be termed a group of extra-calendary divinities; and to this day, whenever Zoroastrian priests perform a ceremony dedicated to all the yazatas of the month, they invoke these three divinities with them, making up still thirty invocations of distinct divinities.[157] The innovators, on the other hand, simply annexed in popular usage the day devoted to the female Waters for Aredvi Sūra Anāhita, yazata of water; and they even more successfully annexed Tištrya's day for Tīri, so that although in the Avestan services performed on that day Tištrya is always invoked, the day actually came to be known not by his name but by that of Tīri.

The reason why the annexation went so far in his case seems to have been the existence of the festival of *Tīrikāna, which with *Mithrakāna had evidently retained its popularity in western Iran even after the coming of Zoroastrianism, and which the Persian priests were plainly concerned to have recognized in the new calendar. This wish of theirs is reflected in the giving and arrangement of the month names. No list of these occurs in the Avesta, presumably because all the dedications of months are to yazatas who also received the dedication of a day; but the names are known from the Pahlavi books, from the various regional Zoroastrian calendars of the Sasanian period, and from living usage. They run as follows:

1. Fravašayō	(March-April)
2. Aša Vahišta	(April-May)
3. Haurvatāt	(May-June)

[156] A connection of the fourfold dedication with Zurvanism was first sought by Nyberg, art. cit. in n. 122, II 128 ff., but with elaborations in which the writer is unable to follow him.

[157] See Modi, CC, 342; Boyce, 'Varuna the Baga', Monumentum G. Morgenstierne, Vol. I, Acta Iranica, in press.

4. Tīri	(June-July)
5. Ameretāt	(July-August)
6. Khšathra Vairya	(August-September)
7. Mithra	(September-October)
8. Āpō	(October-November)
9. Ātar	(November-December)
10. Dadvah Ahura Mazdā	(December-January)
11. Vohu Manah	(January-February)
12. Spenta Ārmaiti	(February-March)

The western priests began, it seems, with several fixed points in this naming of the months. Since they celebrated the new year in Babylonian fashion at the spring equinox, the great Zoroastrian festival of 'New Day' fell for them in March/April, which was thus the first calendar month. Traditionally the feast of All Souls was held just before this, on the last night of the old year;[158] and so the preceding month was named for Spenta Ārmaiti, guardian of the earth which keeps the bones of the dead, and which also, in early spring, bears the first shoots of sprouting corn, symbol of life renewed, while the first month was devoted to the fravašis themselves (or such at least may be supposed to be the reasons for these particular dedications). *Tīrikāna was celebrated in high summer, so Tištrya/Tīri received the fourth month, June/July; and since *Mithrakāna was an autumn festival the seventh month of September/October was given to Mithra. The great open-air fire festival now known as Sada was held in December, and so the ninth month became that of Ātar, yazata of fire.

The other dedications appear to have been decided upon by fresh deliberations made at this time in the light of these fixed points. The chief concern must have been to devote an appropriate month to Ahuramazda; and the conclusion reached, to dedicate to him, as the Creator, the tenth month of December/January, has been generally perplexing to Western scholars. Theologically, however, this was justified, since to the Zoroastrians of old winter was an evil season, when the power of the Hostile Spirit was prevalent in the natural world, and when men had great need of the beneficent protection of the Creator, who through this dedication came to be regularly invoked at every religious service solemnized during that coldest and darkest month.

The six Ameša Spentas could not follow Ahuramazda in due order, as in the day-dedications, because of the already fixed points of the

[158] See HZ I 122 ff.

calendar year; but Vohu Manah at least was given the month immediately after Ahuramazda, as he had received the day. His usual partner, Aša Vahišta, who stands regularly as the second of the great Ameša Spentas, received the dedication of the second month of the year. Khšathra Vairya, as lord of the sky, has a close association with Mithra, lord of the sun; [159] and perhaps for this reason he was assigned the sixth month, which set him moreover at precisely the opposite pole of the year from his partner, Ārmaiti, while Haurvatāt and Ameretāt together flank Tīri, forming with him (as befitted the lords of water and plants) a group presiding over the months of burgeoning and harvest. The one remaining month, of October/November, was allotted to the Waters, Āpō. This dedication had a double appropriateness, since it gave to them the month immediately preceding that of Fire, and since this month is one when in Iran rain often falls.

The influence of the western priests seems stronger in the giving of the month names than in the giving of the day names, since they won recognition for their own festivals of *Mithrakāna and *Tīrikāna, as well as having the 'New Day' festival fixed at what seems to have been their customary time (as against an older autumn observance). In all this the power of the throne may well have made itself felt, since these great feast days probably meant much in the public life of the Persian King of kings.

A number of the Zoroastrian yazatas inevitably found no place in the limited scheme of calendar dedications, even though some (such as Airyaman and Nairyōsanha) were evidently much beloved then and thereafter; and the calendar brought it about that the twenty-seven divinities who finally received dedications came to be recognized as the chief yazatas of the faith, who were all invoked with unfailing regularity wherever there were priests to solemnize the religious services. The failure of the traditionalists to secure a dedication for Varuna must therefore be considered as a major factor in the Ahura's gradual eclipse. There is evidence to show, however, that the eastern communities did not abandon his popular worship without a struggle, and that the Sogdians, for instance, celebrated the feast of *Mithrakāna, brought to them from the west, in honour of him as 'the Baga', and perhaps of Mithra conjoined with him, as befitted the ancient fraternal association of the two lesser Ahuras.[160]

[159] See HZ I 267.
[160] See Boyce, art. cit.

The establishing of new name-day feasts

According to the newly created calendar the festival of *Mithrakāna was now celebrated on the day of Mithra in the month of Mithra; and the festival of *Tīrikāna on the day of Tīri in the month of Tīri; and this evidently provided a model for a whole series of new name-day feasts, held whenever a day and a month were both named for the same divinity. Each of the great Ameša Spentas thus came to have his or her special festival. So too did the Fravašis, in addition to Hamaspathmaēdaya, the traditional feast of All Souls. There was a new feast too for Ātar, celebrated chiefly in the new fire temples, in contrast to the ancient open-air festival of Sada; and there was a feast of the Waters, duly annexed to Aredvi Sūra Anāhita. Above all, four festivals were celebrated in the tenth month, all in honour of the Creator, Ahuramazda; and this made it additionally good that his should be a winter month, when fields were frozen and roads blocked, and when soldiers and merchants, as well as farmers, were at home and able to take part in devotional exercises and in merrymaking.

In all this there appears nothing but piety; but this elaboration of the Zoroastrian holy year threatened to obscure the clear teachings conveyed by the seven seasonal feasts of the primitive faith—in Sasanian terms Nō Rūz and the six gāhāmbārs—which brought home to all believers the doctrines of the great heptad and their seven creations. These feasts alone remained feasts of obligation, neglect of which counted among one's sins at Judgment Day; but the numerous new festivals, which it was meritorious to observe, came very gradually to obscure the effectiveness of their theological message.

The promotion of Sraoša

There is no way of telling when Yasna 16 was assigned its present place in the yasna liturgy, for it may originally have been a separate text, composed as a mnemonic for priests who needed to remember the new order of calendar dedications, and who still made no use of writing for religious purposes. The existing yasna liturgy of 72 chapters is very much a composite work, with the Gathic texts at its core; [161] and some parts of it appear to have been composed originally for a quite different devotional purpose.[162]

[161] See HZ I 265-6.
[162] The best analysis of the yasna texts with ritual remains that of Darmesteter, ZA i, lxxxii ff., who while working on the mss. was able to consult with the learned Parsi priest, Tehmuras Dinshaw Anklesaria. Cf. also Geldner's brilliant study of the Avesta, GIP II, §3 ff. (English transl. by D. Mackichan, in Avesta, Pahlavi and Ancient Persian Studies in honour of ... P. B. Sanjana, Strassburg 1904, 1-82.)

One such text is a long hymn to Sraoša, which now forms the fifty-seventh section of the liturgy. This, like all Avestan yašts, is divided into sections by invocations of the yazata, with his cult-epithets. It is known as *Srōš Yašt sar-i šab*, or the 'Evening hymn to Srōš',[163] since in later times at least it was recited by the pious before they retired to rest. Outside the yasna it may only be recited during the night watches, the second of which, Ušahin, is under Sraoša's own protection.[164] Another, shorter, hymn to Srōš, preserved as Yašt XI, may be recited also in the daylight watches of Hāvan and Aiwisrūthrim, which belong to Mithra and Varuna. This hymn is known as the Srōš Yašt Hādōkht.[165] It is in part derived from Y 57; and Y 57 itself has a number of verses which are plainly modelled on parts of the Mihr Yašt. Sraoša himself, yazata of Obedience and guardian of prayer, appears to belong wholly to Zoroaster's own revelation; and of this is so, there would have been no texts older than the Gathas to honour him. In western Iran at least he seems to have gained popularity only slowly, presumably in opposition to the still more ancient god of prayer, Narišanka (Avestan Nairyōsanha); and his promotion (to become in the end the most often invoked of all the yazatas) appears due to the devotion to him of the priesthood, who had a naturally close affinity to a divinity of prayer. In remote times the priests had had, it seems, Ahuramazda himself for their especial guardian;[166] but through Zoroaster's revelation the Lord of Wisdom, recognised as God, had become too exalted to be closely linked with any one group of men, while in Achaemenian Iran the Persian Great Kings, members of the 'warrior estate', had portrayed themselves as his mortal representatives, appointed by him to rule over the earth. For these reasons there may have been an element of deliberation in the priests' promotion of Sraoša, who, with his cult epithet of *tanu-manthra* 'having sacred words for body', could be regarded as the most priestly of yazatas. In exalting him they proceeded, it seems, from the Gathic verse Y 33.5, in which Zoroaster himself calls Sraoša *vīspə̄-mazišta-* 'greatest of all'. The yazata was, the priests came to claim, the seventh great Ameša Spenta (Spenta Mainyu, the Holy Spirit of God, being generally regarded as one with the supreme Being himself);[167] and they further held that he had been appointed by Ahuramazda to be his vice-regent, ruling spiritually over earth as Ahuramazda himself rules over heaven, and so having the especial care of Ahuramazda's own creation, man.[168] It is just possible that there was also an orthodox reaction in this against Zurvanism (which had made Ahuramazda himself the vice-regent of Zurvan), with an insistence on the greatness and transcendence of Zoroaster's God.

[163] This form exists as a variant, rather better attested by mss. and usage, to Srōš Yašt se šabe, see Darmesteter, op. cit., 358.
[164] See Darmesteter, loc. cit.
[165] See Darmesteter, ZA ii 481-2.
[166] See above, p. 3.
[167] See, e.g., Ind. Bd. XXX.29, GBd. XXXIV.27, and cf. above, p. 94.

Sraoša is thus seen as having vast powers to aid mankind, if his help is duly sought through prayer; and so he has come to be invoked at all moments of spiritual and physical danger, and especially at the time of death. This development was presumably gradual, as his cult made its way against even older traditions, and popular devotion to other yazatas; and it seems that it was to further it that the two yašts to Sraoša were composed. These contain a number of verses which celebrate Sraoša in particular terms as the yazata of prayer; but since Sraoša was close to mighty Mithra, being his *hamkār* or fellow-worker,[169] the priests also adapted verses from the ahura's ancient yašt to help create hymns worthy of his veneration. This could be the more readily done because prayer was seen as a powerful weapon in the struggle against evil, and so the yazata of prayer could be celebrated, like Mithra himself, in warlike terms. Probably the Srōš Yašt sar-i šab grew steadily in length down the generations; but when its first verses were composed remains unknown. It seems likely that it was being recited, in part at least, during the later Achaemenian period, although perhaps not yet incorporated in the yasna liturgy; but what has been said of other later Avestan texts applies also to it, namely that no sure criterion has been discovered by which different periods of composition can be distinguished. 'Old and new have been fused together . . . into an indissoluble unity',[170] in a way characteristic of an oral literature.[171]

The development of western Iranian scholastic literature

The compilers of certain Pahlavi books which embody Zurvanite speculations, or their orthodox developments—notably the Bundahišn and the Selections of Zadspram—state that they derived their materials from the Zand, that is, from the Middle Persian translation of Avestan

[168] See, e.g., GBd. XXVI.46-8.
[169] On this concept see HZ I 267-8.
[170] Geldner, art. cit., § 32 (Mackichan, p. 55).
[171] Serious attempts have been made to assign the great yašts to the 5th century B.C., but these, in addition to treating these works like the products of a written literature, i.e. as the compositions of individual authors, had for their principal piece of chronological evidence the hypothesis (since proved to be wrong) that the Zoroastrian calendar was introduced under Darius the Great, and reformed under Artaxerxes I.

texts, with glosses and commentary. It is by no means possible in these books to distinguish systematically between text and exegesis—that is, to establish with certainty what actually existed in the now lost Avestan originals, as distinct from the commentaries; but it undoubtedly appears that there were Avestan texts which contained elements of the new learning and speculation of the late Achaemenian period. Presumably this learning was so thoroughly assimilated by Zurvanite scholar-priests that they were able to regard it as part of the true heritage of the faith, now properly understood; and so, it seems, they incorporated elements of it into older Avestan works which dealt with cosmogony and cosmology and with prophecies of the future. Such scholastic developments, taking place presumably in priestly colleges of western Iran—in Babylon, or Persepolis, or perhaps Raga—need not have had much impact on the religious community as a whole, or have required that general assent by leading clerics which appears to have been necessary for liturgical innovations, which affected the devotional life of all Zoroastrians. But by the early Sasanian period, when the canon of the Avesta was established, these works would have acquired the patina of age and the holiness attaching to long transmission, as well as being regarded as authoritative by the Zurvanite priests of Pars, who then were enjoying once again the support of the King of kings.

Two allusions to pious domestic practices

Allusions to pious observances in the home are naturally extremely rare for ancient times, but one such for Artaxerxes' reign has been preserved in a citation from Theopompos, who here is criticizing a wealthy Greek for being too eager to be held in honour at the Persian court. Not only did he take his son there with him 'in an attempt thereby to increase the favour and confidence which he enjoyed', but 'every day, when about to dine, he had another table arranged apart and loaded with food and all kinds of provisions, for the service, he said, of the divine spirit (*daemon*) of the king. He heard that this was the practice also of Persian courtiers, and he hoped as a result of this flattery to receive the richer presents from the king'.[172] Theopompos' *daemon* most probably represents in fact the fravaši of the Great King's father, for whom food, consecrated by prayer, would thus be set aside so that its odour should reach him;[173] though for an unbeliever so to prepare unconsecrated food would be a useless act in Zoroastrian eyes. Similar practices are

[172] Athenaeus, Deipnosophists VI.60.252 (Clemen, Fontes, 25; F.-P. 26).
[173] So Clemen, Nachrichten, 131.

maintained by Zoroastrians to this day, but only on special occasions in honour of the dead.[174]

Then in a passage in his 'Life of Artaxerxes' Plutarch tells how the host at a festive gathering, wishing to check a palpably calamitous conversation, intervenes, saying 'Let us for the present eat and drink, revering the fortune of the king'.[175] This would seem an allusion to the custom (well attested from Sasanian times[176]) of formally invoking divine blessings before a banquet, in this case, it seems, specifically upon, or through, the royal khvarenah.

The spread of the image cult to other yazatas

In 1974 a block of marble was recovered from a Roman ruin at Sardis, which bore thirteen lines of an apparently complete Greek text, carved, it is thought, in the mid-second century A.C.[177] This proved to be the copy of a text composed some five hundred years earlier, reproduced presumably as a memorial to the history of the cult concerned, and to enforce a particular prohibition. It runs: 'In the thirty-ninth year of the reign of Artaxerxes, Droaphernes son of Barakes, governor of Lydia, consecrated the statue to Zeus the Lawgiver. He orders the attendant temple-priests who have the right to enter the sanctuary and who crown the god not to take part in the mysteries of Sabazios of those who carry the victims to be burnt, and of Angodistes and of Ma. They order Dorates the temple-priest to abstain from these mysteries'.

The last sentence appears to be an addition to the ancient text, relevant perhaps to the Roman period when it was inscribed. Since the Artaxerxes in question is most probably Artaxerxes II, the original words can be assigned to 365 B.C.[178] The names Druvafarnah son of Baraka are clearly Iranian, and thus suitable for a satrap of Lydia at that period; and so, it is argued, the Zeus of the inscription must be understood as the standard Greek rendering of Ahuramazda, appearing here with an epithet *baradāta* 'lawgiver', which, although otherwise unattested, seems wholly suitable to him as God of justice and God also of the ruling Persians.[179] Presumably there was originally a version of the edict in Imperial Aramaic, in which Ahuramazda would have received his proper name; but naturally this version was not reproduced in the Roman period.

[174] See Modi, CC, 402-4.
[175] Artaxerxes, XV.
[176] See J. C. Tavadia, 'Sūr Saxvan', JCOI 29, 1935, 1-99.
[177] See L. Robert, 'Une nouvelle inscription grecque de Sardes', CRAIBL 1975, 306-31.
[178] See ibid., 310.
[179] See ibid., 311-2, 314.

This inscription appears to be the oldest piece of evidence for the setting up of a statue to a yazata other than Anāhita. That statues came to be generally used in Zoroastrian worship is known from the Parthian period, but previously there had been no means of gauging how rapidly this development took place. The Sardis stone shows that it began in Artaxerxes' own reign, at least in the western satrapies, where his innovation presumably caused the least shock and stir, since for generations Persians had lived there among peoples who set up cult images.

The two Greek words rendered above as 'attendant temple-priests' are *neōkóros therapeutês*. In ancient usage, it has been pointed out, the *neōkóros* was one closely associated with the details of cultic observances, while the term *therapeutês* was used for a member of an association of devotees who placed themselves at the service of a particular divinity.[180] In Zoroastrian usage (especially in those days when magi were numerous) it is most unlikely that such men would be other than priests, observing the strict laws of purity and so alone permitted to enter the inner sanctuary (*ádyton* in the inscription). This purity would necessarily be broken by attendance at the rites of any other faith, hence, it seems, the prohibitions contained in the text.[181] (In India, many centuries later, the Parsi elders had similar struggles to prevent members of their community joining in colourful Hindu festivals and observances.) The inscription is of further interest in its indication of rites in connection with the Zoroastrian image-cult, of which otherwise little is known. Such rites are likely in a large measure to have been taken over with the alien custom of image-worship; and the use of the verb 'crown' in the present tense suggests a recurrent and regular observance of a kind well known in Greek cults.[182] Some rites are likely to have been adopted locally from Greeks, and others from Babylonian or other traditions; and Zoroastrianism thus evolved forms of worship which were wholly foreign both to the primitive and to the later phases of the faith, but which were to flourish for centuries. Parallels to such developments can readily be drawn from the history of Christianity; and there may well have been almost as great differences regionally in the conduct of these newer rites as there are in observance between the different Christian churches.

Another text found on a stele at Sardis bears an inscription, dateable to about 100 A.C., honouring a distinguished Greek citizen who, having by long family tradition shown piety 'towards the divine', had been 'consecrated' and then crowned 'by the attendants of Zeus who are among those who have the right to enter the sanctuary'.[183] The similarity of phrase suggests that this text too refers to the cult of the Iranian Zeus, that is, Ahuramazda. The position of the stele in question shows that his temple stood close to that of Artemis, one of the great sanctuaries of Sardis; and it has been suggested that it was perhaps he who was honoured as Zeus Polieus Megistos, 'Great Zeus, guardian of the city', a divine name several times attested in connection with that place.[184] Zeus Megistos is used of Ahuramazda in Xenophon's Cyropaedia,[185] and probably also in the Greek inscription in the Frātadāra temple; and the adjective seems a worthy acknowledgement of the dignity of the Persians' God, whose worship is thus attested as flourishing still in Lydia centuries after Alexander had wrenched that land from Persian rule. Consideration of the many other pieces of evidence for the long survival of Zoroastrianism in Asia Minor (until its final extinction there in the post-Sasanian period) must be left to later volumes of the present history.

[180] See ibid., 317-9.
[181] On the cults in question see ibid., 324.
[182] See ibid., 319 with n. 45.

The political background of Artaxerxes II's reign

What appears to have been intense religious activity during Artaxerxes' reign had a fairly eventful political background. Egypt had broken free from Persian rule before he came to the throne, and successive attempts to reconquer it proved unsuccessful. Indeed, at times the power of an independent Egypt reached northward to assert itself over Phoenicia and Syria. Another trouble which Artaxerxes inherited was a revolt by the Cadusians, a vigorous Iranian people of the north-west. This revolt dragged on, with harassing raids; and in the end Artaxerxes himself led an army to subdue it. The expedition nearly failed, and his soldiers suffered greatly from cold and hunger in the mountains. The king shared their hardships, and Plutarch gives a striking account of the homeward march, after peace had been concluded: 'The king now made it plain that cowardice and effeminacy are not always due to luxury and extravagance ... For neither gold nor robe of state nor the twelve thousand talents' worth of adornment which always enveloped the person of the king prevented him from undergoing toils and hardship like an ordinary soldier; nay, with his quiver girt upon him and his shield on his arm he marched in person at the head of his troops, over

[183] See ibid., 320 ff.
[184] See ibid., 311 with nn.
[185] See Clemen, Nachrichten, 88.

precipitous mountain roads, abandoning his horse, so that the rest of the army had wings given them and felt their burden lightened when they saw his ardour and spirit'.[186]

With regard to the ever-quarrelling Greeks, Artaxerxes felt at first a natural hostility towards the Spartans, who had supported his brother Cyrus in his bid for the throne; and Tiribazus, who succeeded Tissaphernes as satrap of Lydia, and who favoured Sparta, was recalled in 392 and replaced by Autophradates (who appears as satrap on one of the monuments at Xanthos[187]). After the internecine Greek fighting had dragged on for some more years, the Persians initiated negotiations for peace, and a great congress was held at Sardis, in 387, attended by representatives of all the warring Greek states. There an imperial edict was read out, as follows: 'Artaxerxes the Great King deems it just that the cities of Asia Minor belong to him, and, of the islands, Clazomenae and Cyprus; that other Greek cities, large and small, be autonomous with the exception of Lemnos, Imbros, and Skyros, which, as of old, shall belong to the Athenians. Whoever does not accept this peace, I shall make war upon him, together with those who agree [i.e. to the peace], with ships and with money'.[188] These terms, of what came to be known as 'the King's peace', were agreed to by the Greeks; and it has been said that this was 'a sign of the ascendancy of the Persian Empire, which now achieved the height of its influence over Greece. No one in Hellas dared oppose the decree of the Great King'.[189] Nevertheless in the following years fighting broke out again repeatedly among the Greeks, and at the end of Artaxerxes II's reign 'Greece was still fragmented into independent and antagonistic states, and the power of Persia to keep her so seemed undiminished'.[190]

Before then, in 362, Persia herself suffered from internecine strife through the great revolt of Persian satraps and tributary dynasts in Asia Minor, Syria and Phoenicia. The causes of this revolt are not fully determined, but a dominant motive appears to have been simply the desire for local autonomy. The uprising affected wealthy coastal regions, and Persia lost heavily in tribute; but the rebel leaders failed to act for long in concert, there were mutual betrayals, and most of the affected areas soon returned to Persian allegiance.

[186] Artaxerxes, XXIV.
[187] I.e. the Payava monument, see below.
[188] Xenophon, Hellenica V.1.31; see Olmstead, Persian History, 395; Bengtson, Greek and Persians, 212.
[189] Bengtson, ibid., 213.
[190] Ibid., 239.

The monument of Payava

Autophradates, satrap of Lydia, who fought a number of engagements on the King's behalf with rebel satraps (as well as lapsing briefly into secession himself), has left what was evidently a finely carved representation of himself on the badly mutilated tomb of Payava at Xanthos.[191] Payava, of the 'Termilian' (i.e. Lycian) people, was apparently one of Autophradates' army commanders, and the Persian satrap had this impressive sepulchre built for him, and adorned with commemorative sculptures (of Hellenic workmanship), and inscriptions in the Lycian language. The tomb was of a kind which could be erected without qualm by a Zoroastrian for a non-Zoroastrian, being (like other Lycian tombs) all of stone, with the funerary chamber raised on a foundation of solid marble slabs, and roofed with a great monolith. The monument has been dated to around 380-370 B.C.

Plato and Zoroastrianism

During the early years of Artaxerxes II's reign Plato had been a pupil of Socrates; and in 387 he founded the Academy in Athens, over which he presided till his death in 348/7. He lived thus at a time when Persia dominated the affairs of Greece; and among his own friends was the Ionian mathematician-astronomer Eudoxus of Cnidus, who in furtherance of his studies travelled to Egypt and Babylon, and brought back new stores of learning. 'Our material unfortunately does not permit us' (it has been said) 'to evaluate to its full extent the tremendous influences exercised upon the Platonists by this man. They are connected in part with the Academy's admiration for Chaldean and 'Syrian' astronomy, from whose empirical acquaintance with the heavens it had obtained its reckoning of the times of revolution and its knowledge of the seven planets . . . In part, again, these tendencies are connected with the appeal of the religious dualism of the Parsees, which seemed to lend support to the dualistic metaphysics of Plato's old age. The bad world-soul that opposes the good one in the *Laws* is a tribute to Zarathustra, to whom Plato was attracted because of the mathematical phase that his idea-theory finally assumed, and because of the intensified dualism involved therein. From that time onward the Academy was keenly interested in Zarathustra and the teaching of the Magi'.[192] This then, it seems, is the second period when Zoroaster's doctrines had a powerful influence on Greek thought, the first being that of the early Ionian philosophers.

[191] See Shahbazi, Irano-Lycian monuments, 135-47 with Pls LXXVI-LXXXII.
[192] W. Jaeger, Aristotle, 132.

According to a citation from his works by Pliny, Eudoxus sought to have Zoroastrianism recognized as 'the most famous and the most useful of the learned sects'; [193] but although he duly reported its dualistic beliefs,[194] it is probable that, learning of the faith from Persian magi in Babylon, he associated its doctrines with astronomical lore which had nothing to do with Zoroaster's original teachings. This would account for the fact that Plato's pupil, Hermodorus, discussing astralism in his Mathematics, derived the name Zarathuštra from it, declaring that it meant 'star-worshipper' (*astrothútēs*).[195]

The linking of Plato with Zoroaster in a millenary scheme

It is further likely that Eudoxus came to know Zoroastrianism in its Zurvanite form, which appears to have developed in Babylonia, and that he was instructed in a version of the Zurvanite millenary scheme of world history which led him to assign the prophet to a period '6000 years ago'. This date was evidently arrived at somehow through the scheme of 3000-year cycles, although it does not correspond with Zoroaster's place in the fully evolved world chronology as this reaches us through the Pahlavi books. Later, it seems, after Plato died, Aristotle, 'led by his doctrine of the periodical return of all human knowledge, first specifically connected this figure with the return of dualism', and set the Iranian prophet at '6000 years before the death of Plato', thus connecting him with the Greek philosopher 'as two essentially similar historical phenomena', and thereby putting Plato 'in a setting that corresponded to his profound reverence for him'. 'The Academy's enthusiasm for Zarathustra amounted to intoxication, like the rediscovery of Indian philosophy through Schopenhauer. It heightened the historical self-consciousness of the school to think that Plato's doctrine of the Good as a divine and universal principle had been revealed to eastern humanity by an Oriental prophet thousands of years before'.[196] Before Aristotle made this connection other Academics had attempted different determinations of Zoroaster's date. 'Hermodorus, for instance, had put him 5,000 years before the fall of Troy. The researches of this Platonist were still the main authority on the matter when the learned Alexandrian Sotion wrote his history of the philosophical schools. Besides Hermodorus he mentioned the suggestion of Xanthus, according to which Zarathustra

[193] Nat. Hist. XXX.1.3.
[194] See Diogenes Laertius I.8 (Clemen, Fontes, 75; F.-P. 81).
[195] See ibid.; Jaeger, loc. cit.
[196] Jaeger, op. cit., 133-6; cf. Benveniste, Persian religion, 15-21.

lived 6,000 years before the invasion of Xerxes'.[197] It seems likely that this last suggestion was wrongly attributed to Xanthos, since there is no reason to suppose that the magi were already making chronological calculations according to millenary schemes in the early fifth century B.C.[198] In any case, this and the other proposed dates are all clearly valueless from the point of view of determining when Zoroaster actually lived; but they at least show that the Persian magi in the fourth century B.C. regarded their prophet as a figure of immense antiquity, and not as a contemporary of Cyrus, the founder of the reigning dynasty.

Plato and Zoroastrian ethics

With regard to Plato's acquaintance with Zoroastrian ethics, in the Alcibiades, a work emanating from the Academy sometime after 374, an account is given of the education of Persian princes in the following terms: 'When the boys are seven years old they are given horses and have riding lessons, and they begin to follow the chase. And when the boy reaches fourteen years he is taken over by the royal tutors, as they call them there: these are four men chosen as the most highly esteemed among the Persians of mature age, namely the wisest one, the justest one, the most temperate one, and the bravest one. The first of these teaches him the Magian lore of Zoroaster, son of Horomazes, and that is the worship of the gods: he teaches him also what pertains to a king. The justest teaches him to be truthful all his life long; the most temperate, not to be mastered by even a single pleasure, in order that he may be accustomed to be a free man and a veritable king, who is first master of all that is in him, not the slave; while the bravest trains him to be fearless and undaunted, telling him that to be daunted is to be enslaved'.[199] The virtues in which Persian princes were thus to be instructed, of wisdom, justice, temperance and courage, are bound up with Zoroaster's own moral theology, and they are ones which accordingly we have met individual Iranians striving to practise throughout the Achaemenian period. They are identical also with the virtues characterized by Plato as those 'of the soul'.[200]

Artaxerxes II's last years, and his tomb

Artaxerxes, Plutarch relates, lived till he was ninety-four and had many sons, including three born to him by his long-dead Queen of

[197] Jaeger, op. cit., 133.
[198] The attribution (made by Diogenes Laertius, I.2) has been generally regarded with suspicion, see, e,g., Clemen, Nachrichten, 26-7.
[199] Alcibiades I.121.
[200] See Jaeger, op. cit., 43, 132.

queens, Statira.[201] The eldest of these, Darius, was officially recognized as his heir, but growing impatient for the crown, he conspired to murder his father. He was caught preparing for the deed, and, according to some accounts, was tried by the royal judges in the king's absence, condemned and executed. According to others, Plutarch says, Artaxerxes slew his son with his own hand. 'Then, going forth into the court, he made obeisance to the sun and said: "Depart in joy and peace, ye Persians, and say to all whom ye meet that those who contrived impious and unlawful things have been punished by great Oromasdes"'.[202]

Thereafter, it is told, his second son Ariaspes, being misled by his youngest brother, Artaxerxes, into thinking that the king was angered against him also, took his own life by poison. The king is said then to have favoured a son born to him by another queen, one Arsames,whose death the younger Artaxerxes compassed by violence, causing his aged father to die of grief, in the year 358, leaving this son to succeed him as Artaxerxes III. It was just about this time that the equally ambitious and determined Philip became ruler of Macedon as regent for his young nephew Amyntas, whose throne he was soon to usurp.

Artaxerxes II had had his tomb prepared, not beside those of the earlier kings of his line at Naqš-i Rustam, but in the so-called 'Royal Hill' behind Persepolis. One other tomb was made there, which is attributed to Artaxerxes III. The two tombs 'were carved in the stepped slope of the mountain, which is less suitable for sculptures of lofty height than the steep cliff of Naqš-i Rustam'; [213] and partly for this reason, partly, it is thought, because of the greater security of the site, there is no blank register left smooth below the entrance door. Otherwise the sculptures are planned like those of the Naqš-i Rustam tombs; although a remarkable feature is that, though there is as usual no identifying inscription, the cuneiform legends naming the nationalities of the throne-bearers, representatives of the peoples of the Empire, have been copied exactly from the tomb of Darius the Great. No other tomb but Darius' own has any writing at all. This detail is perhaps to be linked with the fact that especial care was taken over the details of the tomb carving.[204] The cornice over the tomb doorway was copied almost exactly from the cornice of Darius' palace at Persepolis, and the entablature of the lower register is embellished with a frieze of walking lions, while in the upper register the figure in the winged disk can be clearly seen to be wearing a

[201] Artaxerxes, XXX.
[202] Ibid., XXIX (on which see Clemen, Nachrichten, 87).
[203] Schmidt, Persepolis III, 99.
[204] See ibid., 99-100.

wavy bracelet like the king's, and to have an earring in its left ear. In general the reliefs were carved with exceptional care; and the reason, it is suggested, may have been that, without the bottom register, they could be seen much more clearly from the ground. The composition is exactly the same as that of the tomb facades at Naqš-i Rustam. So, despite all the religious developments of his reign, and the likelihood of his own adherence to Zurvanism, Artaxerxes was content to maintain the funerary iconography of his forefathers, which represented the King of kings as a Mazda-worshipper at prayer before the ancient icon of fire.

The tomb has as usual three burial vaults, but each of them contains two cists. Four heavy stone lids and a fragment of a fifth were found in the entrance chamber, flung there evidently by the tomb robbers.

Retrospect: the religious developments in Artaxerxes II's reign

Artaxerxes is generally regarded as an amiable man who lacked the fibre to be a really successful ruler of a vast empire; but the testimony of Greek writers suggests that he was truly devout, and it seems that his devotion, being allied to the zeal and iron resolve of his mother, Parysatis, brought about a whole series of striking and far-reaching developments for the faith during his reign. Zurvanism and image worship were essentially alien to the fundamental tenets of Zoroastrianism, and so were eventually rejected; but the temple cult of fire remains today the focal point of Zoroastrian worship, and the religious calendar continues in use, with the veneration of the major yazatas whose number it defined and with the celebration still of the associated name-day feasts.

All this makes it probable that the later 'Ardaširs' of the Zoroastrian community were named in pious remembrance, following tradition, of this Achaemenian monarch, one of the most effective royal patrons (for better or worse) whom the faith has known.

CHAPTER FOURTEEN

ARTAXERXES III (358-338 B.C.)

Artaxerxes III thus came to the throne (if the Greek accounts are to be trusted) by bloody means; and he is said to have ensured his place upon it by having as many as eighty of his half-brothers put to death. The prize thus cruelly won was huge, and ambitious men before him had thought it worth much sacrifice of life; for as his uncle, the younger Cyrus, said, when seeking it, to the Greek officers in his pay: 'My father's realm extends towards the south to a region where men cannot dwell by reason of the heat, and to the north to a region where they cannot dwell by reason of the cold; and all that lies between these limits my brother's friends rule as satraps'.[1]

The reconquest of Egypt

This great empire had contracted during the last years of Darius II, and Artaxerxes II had failed to restore it to its former bounds; but his son now took vigorous measures to do so. He re-established Persian authority in Asia Minor, ordering the satraps there (who had attempted further insurrection) to disband their Greek mercenaries; and he overcame the still rebellious Cadusians and enrolled their fighting men in an army gathered for the reconquest of Egypt. This was a more difficult task, and the first campaign, of 351-350, ended in failure, and with Cyprus, Phoenicia, and Cilicia in revolt. It was five years before Artaxerxes marched again on Egypt, at the head of a huge army, and this time he was successful, making himself master of the whole of Lower Egypt by 343. He took harsh measures to discourage further uprisings: the walls of the chief cities were razed, and the gold and silver of the temples was confiscated, together with the holy records (which were later redeemed by the priests at heavy cost).[2] Later Greek writers have Artaxerxes also slaughtering the Apis-bull with his own hand, and the no less holy ram of Mendes; but this, it is thought, is probably an adaptation of the slanders uttered about Cambyses (although whether originating with Greek writers or Egyptian priests there is no knowing).[3] In

[1] Xenophon, Anabasis, I.vii.6.
[2] See Olmstead, Persian Empire, 440; Kienitz, Die politische Geschichte Ägyptens, 107.
[3] See Kienitz, op. cit., 108.

this and in other ways, it is said, Artaxerxes III has been 'often underestimated and misrepresented. He was hard and at times also brutal and terrible, but a skilled politician and strategist, energetic and tough, wise and also upright. He was the man whom the Achaemenian Empire then needed'.[4]

Egypt thus came under Persian rule again after over half a century of independence; and there is nothing to tell us of the fate during those fifty odd years of the Persian communities which had earlier become established there, with their Zoroastrian priests and their 'places of rites'. But if there had been slaughter and destruction, then there was restoration again at this epoch, attested by the 'Mithraion' which was still being maintained by Persians in Fayum in the period after Alexander.[5]

A trilingual stele of Xanthos

In 1973 a striking monument was unearthed at the city of Xanthos (called in the local tongue Orna), namely a stele bearing inscriptions in Lycian, Greek and Imperial Aramaic. The three inscriptions are not versions of an identical text, but deal variously with the same subject matter, which was the establishment, in the sacred precinct of that city,[6] of a sanctuary to a divinity known as the 'Lord (or King) of Caunos', with his companion-deity, who in the Greek version appears as Arkesimas; the appointment of a priest and his descendants to serve there; and the fixing of the endowments and regular sacrifices.[7]

The Aramaic text is the only one to begin with a dating formula. Its lines, which are slightly damaged, run as follows:[8] 'In the month Siwan of the first year of Artakhšaṣa the King in the citadel of Orna, Pixōdara, son of Katamnō, the satrap who is in Karka and Termila, has declared: The citizens of Orna have undertaken to establish a cult (**krp'*) in honour of the Lord the god of Caunos, and of R[..]. And they have appointed as priest Simias, son of Koddorasi. And there is a house (*dm'*) which the citizens of Orna have given to the Lord the god. And year by year, on the part of the city, there is paid in silver a mina and a half. The said priest sacrifices at the beginning of the month a

[4] Ibid., 108-9.
[5] See above, p. 186.
[6] On which see H. Metzger and P. Coupel, Fouilles de Xanthos, II: l'Acropole lycienne et son enceinte, Paris 1963.
[7] The three versions were treated independently, in CRAIBL 1974, by H. Metzger (the Greek text), pp. 82-93; E. Laroche (the Lycian), pp. 115-25; and A. Dupont-Sommer (the Aramaic), pp. 132-49.
[8] See Dupont-Sommer, loc. cit., 137.

sheep to the Lord the god, and to R[..], and year by year an ox. And the said house is left (to the god) as his own. This law (*dth*) he (Pixōdara) has written so that it is kept (?). And if anyone carries off what is vowed to the Lord the god or the priest (then) living, may he be carried off by the Lord the god of Orna, and by the Abyss! And may he be carried off, (being) guilty, by the God and by Lātō, and by Artemis and by Khšathrapati (*hštrpty*) and others. And may these gods demand of him (expiation)'.

This Aramaic text, with its sprinkling of Persian words (given above in transliteration), was drawn up evidently by scribes of the satrapal chancellery, and the original was presumably filed among their records. It constitutes an abridgement of the Lycian and Greek texts, with the dating formula added at the beginning, and the minatory threats at the end extended, to emphasize the divine authority behind Persian law (the *dāta*, Aram. *dth*, of the inscription). This official declaration has the place of prominence on the front face of the stele, and is flanked by the other two versions. (The fourth face was blank, as the monument was set against a wall.)

Pixadoros was not himself a Persian, however, but a member of a leading Carian family. When Caria became an independent satrapy (probably in 396/5, when the great region which had been governed by Tissaphernes was split up), Artaxerxes II had appointed his grandfather Hyssaldomos as satrap.[9] Hyssaldomos was soon followed by his son Hekatomnos (the Katamnō of the Aramaic inscription), who was succeeded in his turn, in 377/6, by Maussollos, Pixadoros' eldest brother, who greatly extended his domains, and became a man of wealth and power. He took part in the Satraps' Revolt of 362,[10] and for this reason, it is suggested, was deprived of his satrapy by Artaxerxes III, being replaced by Pixadoros, who became satrap of both Caria and Lycia;[11] and it was perhaps (it is thought)[12] to further the unity of these two regions that Pixadoros was prepared to be active in fostering the cult of the 'Lord of Caunos' in Lycian Xanthos. (Caunos was a Carian city near the border between the two lands.) Hence in the Aramaic inscription (but in that version alone) 'the Lord, the god of Caunos' is in the one place called 'the Lord, the god of Orna'.

[9] See Gabriele Bockisch, 'Die Karer und ihre Dynasten', Klio 51, 1969, 133 ff.
[10] See ibid., 149-50.
[11] See Dupont-Sommer, art. cit., 140-1.
[12] See ibid., 144.

A Persian Ministry for Pious Foundations?

These special circumstances make it doubtful whether this inscription can properly be used as evidence to show that in every satrapal chancellery there was some kind of office for overseeing and regularizing the religious affairs of subject peoples, 'not in order to impose on them Iranian divinities or cults, but to ensure good order and security in a domain which in ancient societies was politically so important and often vexed'.[13] It seems more likely that official Persian interest in such matters ordinarily went no further than requiring the due registration of deeds of endowment, and sometimes, in the case of wealthy and powerful foundations, the right to approve the appointment of a high priest.[14] It is quite probable, however, that the long-attested Zoroastrian custom of making religious endowments, together with the evidently rapid establishment of Zoroastrian temples of various kinds in the fourth century, led to a chancellery department (such as is known from Sasanian times) being set up already in the Achaemenian period to deal specifically with Zoroastrian pious foundations.

Some of the Persian words which occur in this Aramaic text may well have been used also for Zoroastrian holy places. Thus it is very possible that, beside the attested name **bagina*, an image shrine was also sometimes called 'the house' (Persian *dāma*) of the god—a common general usage. The reading **krp'* is not wholly certain, but the letters have been thus made out in the light of Skt. *kálpa* 'ritual', to be associated possibly with Av. *karapan-* as 'ritual priest'.[15]

Mithra Khšathrapati?

Still more interest has focussed on the Persian word which appears in the final maledictions as the name of a god, the son of 'Lātō'. Lātō's cult was of long standing in Xanthos, and the new shrine was within the precinct holy to her, which is clearly why she is invoked to watch over it. The offspring of Lātō were Artemis and Apollo, who in the Greek and Lycian texts are not named, but appear together as her 'descendants' or 'children'; but in the Aramaic text Artemis' name follows that of her mother, and then, instead of Apollo, comes Iranian Khšathrapati. This title is not attested in the surviving Iranian literature, but is very close to the Gathic phrase *paiti- khšathrahyā* (Y 44.9), used by Zoroaster of

[13] Ibid., 141.
[14] As is known to have been the case in Egypt under Darius the Great, see above, pp. 124-5.
[15] See M. Mayrhofer, 'Kleinasien zwischen Agonie des Perserreiches und hellenistischem Frühling', Anzeiger d. Österreichischen Ak. d. Wissenschaften 112, 1975, 278; and cf. HZ I 12.

Ahuramazda, which has been variously rendered as 'Lord of the Kingdom', 'Lord of power', and 'Lord of kingly might'.[16] On the Xanthos stele, it is suggested, the title most probably belongs to Mithra.[17] It has further been proposed, tentatively, to see in its use, where Apollo's name was to be expected, 'the very first trace of an Apollo-Mithra syncretism', such as is attested in Asia Minor in the Hellenistic period.[18] It seems more probable, however, that what in fact we have here is more simply the substitution of Mithra's name for that of Apollo, made possible because both divinities were associated with the sun, and desirable as being thought to be more effective. Although Apollo had many gifts and powers attributed to him, he nowhere appears as a god of justice, and his invocation here would simply have been as the son of Lātō; whereas in the Iranian world Mithra is the Judge, whose essential task is to watch over covenants and to punish those who fail to keep them. His invocation would therefore have had deep significance for those who knew of his character and powers; and these are likely to have included most citizens of Xanthos, a city which had been ruled by Irano-Lycians since the days when Harpagos the Mede, having conquered Lycia for Cyrus, became its satrap and founded a hereditary dynasty there;[19] and which, as the chief city of a Persian satrapy, must always have had its Persian garrison and its Persian officials and settlers, with their priests.[20] It had probably also witnessed many annual celebrations of the *Mithrakāna, as well as hearing many an oath sworn by Mithra both in daily life and on solemn occasions. The Persian language must have been widely understood and used, from a smattering perhaps by shopkeepers to a fluent command by officials; and Pixadoros' edict would of course have been proclaimed in Persian, although written down in Aramaic. There was possibly therefore an element of diplomacy in using a title for Mithra rather than his proper name—a title which was perhaps a cult-epithet of his in Median worship, but whose general sense would have allowed the priests of Lātō, if they so wished, to interpret it as belonging to their own Apollo.

Religious syncretism, symbiosis and interpretation

The substitution of this Iranian title for the name of the Greek Apollo leads to difficult general questions about religious contacts and in-

[16] See Dupont-Sommer, art. cit., 146 n. 1 for references.
[17] See ibid., 146-7.
[18] Ibid., 146; cf. Mayrhofer, art. cit., 279.
[19] On this dynasty see above, p. 172.
[20] Cf. Shahbazi, Irano-Lycian monuments, 42.

fluences. The early syncretisms of Babylonian and Iranian gods, Ishtar with Anāhiti, Nabū with Tīri, came about when the western Iranians were still polytheists (in the usual sense of that term), before Zoroastrianism reached them. (At that same remote period the cult of Shamash had probably had some influence on that of Mithra.[21]) It seems wholly unlikely, however, that the influences were two-way—that Persian beliefs about Anāhiti and Tīri had any effect on Babylonian ones about Ishtar and Nabū. It was the Babylonian religion, bound up with the immensely impressive astronomical learning of its priests, and linked with an ancient and imposing urban culture, which had its influence, in these limited respects, on that of the incoming Persians. Once Zoroastrianism, with its strict and defined doctrines, had established itself in western Iran, new and effective syncretisms were virtually impossible; and even the already developed syncretic cults of Anāhiti and Tīri seem to have gained acceptance by the community as a whole only tardily and under ruthless royal pressure.

The 'translation' of the names of the gods of one faith by those of another, as a simple means of interpreting alien beliefs, is clearly a quite different matter, and does not in itself imply syncretism of any sort. From the time at least of Herodotus Greek writers regularly pursued this practice, replacing, for example, the name of Ahuramazda by that of their own Zeus; but plainly neither Iranian beliefs about Ahuramazda nor Greek ones about Zeus were thereby affected. Further, we have seen the Persian satrap of Lydia, Druvafarnah, using the name 'Zeus the lawgiver', apparently for Ahuramazda, in the Greek version of one of his own edicts, while at the same time making certain restrictions intended to keep the cult concerned pure. The terms of this edict, it has been pointed out, suggest symbiosis in the religious life of Sardis, not syncretism, with a variety of faiths existing side by side, attracting to some extent the same groups of worshippers, but each keeping its beliefs and cults distinct.[22]

Yet there was evidently and inevitably some interchange between diverse religions. Thus, as we have seen, Zoroastrianism not only developed, under alien influences, a heretical worship of the god of Time, but also, in adopting an image cult, necessarily took over some of the alien rituals which went with it. In general, however, it was Zoroastrianism itself, as the religion of the imperial people, and one endowed with a

[21] See above, p. 28 ff.
[22] See Robert, CRAIBL 1975, 325; C. G. Starr, 'Greek and Persians in the fourth century B.C.', Iran. Ant. XI, 1976, 92 n. 141.

powerful theology and eschatology, which could be expected to exert the strongest influences; and that this was so is in fact amply attested, as we have seen, through Judaism and the Gnostic faiths, as well as through Mithraism, a syncretic religion which probably arose in Asia Minor. And it is that region of many faiths which in fact yields some direct evidence for the adopting, in Achaemenian times, of elements of Zoroastrian belief by various subject peoples, who being polytheists could readily incorporate these into their own creeds. Thus there is no reason to suppose that Pixadoros, in invoking Mithra, had abandoned allegiance to his own ancestral gods. The Carian dynasty gave its chief loyalty to Zeus Stratios of Labraunda, an ancient god who first appears in Hittite guise, clad in a loin-cloth, with double-headed axe in his right hand and a lion at his feet; but who by the fourth century B.C. had become Hellenized in appearance as well as name, with himation and chiton, and no lion, although he still brandishes his axe.[23] But presumably Pixadoros, like other members of his family, while loyally worshipping the Labraundian god, had become thoroughly familiar also with the Persian divinity who enforced the observance of Persian law, and was ready to call upon him too when his help was needed.

Some evidence from coins

Some further evidence concerning these complex matters is provided by coins. The Achaemenian Empire, it has been established, made use of two different systems of currency.[24] Over most of the Empire a silver standard was operated, a system inherited from the Mesopotamian civilizations: the barter of commodities was still widely practised, but the ultimate standard of value was provided by silver weighed upon scales. There was no requirement for this to be in the form of coin; and a hoard of some 200 silver objects (including broken jewellery as well as ingots) found at the Median site of Tepe Nush-i Jan, and thought to have been deposited there about 600 B.C., shows that western Iranians had accustomed themselves to this use of silver even before the Achaemenian period.[25] The development enabled Zoroastrian priests to see therein an extension of the dominion of Khšathra Vairya, lord of metals; for to use wealth of this kind wisely and charitably, they taught, was yet

[23] See, with references, Bockisch, art. cit. in n. 9, 130-1.

[24] See A. D. H. Bivar, 'Achaemenid Coins, Weights and Measures', Cambridge History of Iran II (ed. I. Gershevitch), in press.

[25] See A. D. H. Bivar, 'A Hoard of Ingot-currency of the Median Period from Nūsh-i Jān, near Malayir', Iran IX, 1971, 97-107.

another way by which kings and nobles could serve that great Ameša Spenta, their own especial protector.[26]

This piece of moral theology was reinforced by the spread of the use of coins. The minting of coins originated in Lydia, where in the sixth century Croesus issued both gold and silver coins. Cyrus maintained the Lydian mint at Sardis and continued to strike coins there of Croesus' types, bearing a lion-and-bull motif; but about 515 Darius introduced his own coin-types, the famous 'darics'.[27] These bore the figure of the king himself, either half-length, or shooting with a bow, or running with a spear; and these types remained in use under all the succeeding Achaemenians, the wealth of Caesar being thus marked with Caesar's own image. The minting of coins within the empire appears to have remained confined to Asia Minor; but there the King of kings permitted satraps, local dynasts and cities to strike their own coins, and it is reckoned that over 30 mints were active in the fifth century, and that by the fourth century over 70 cities alone were producing coins, of very varied designs.[28] The Persian satraps, it is thought, struck coins from the late fifth century, mainly to pay their foreign mercenaries; and the earliest known issue is that of Tissaphernes, satrap at Sardis under Darius II, who in 412/411 minted coins to pay the Spartan fleet, which was then serving his cause. His coins are the first ones known to bear a portrait-head of a ruler. Other large issues were made subsequently under Artaxerxes II by the satraps Tiribazus (386-381), Pharnabazus (379-374) and Datames (378-372). The satraps' names are regularly in Aramaic script; and the coins have sometimes Hellenized, sometimes specifically Persian motifs, such as the running archer-king, and the horse at a flying gallop. The winged disk too is not uncommon, as might be expected of a symbol of khvarenah, divine fortune, which would naturally be desired by the Iranian warrior-lords; and an interesting variant of it occurs on a coin of Tiribazus, minted probably at Tarsus in Cilicia, which shows the winged disk with the torso of a naked man of distinctly Hellenic appearance.[29]

On some satrapal coins of the fourth century there appear figures of Greek gods; and these may be examples of visual 'interpretation', for once the practice of image worship had been established among Zoroastrians (and as we have seen, this was perhaps introduced locally in western

[26] See, e.g., F. M. P. Kotwal (ed.), The supplementary texts to the Šāyest nē-šāyest, Copenhagen 1969, XV.18.

[27] See E. S. G. Robinson, 'The beginnings of Achaemenid coinage', NC 1958, 187-93.

[28] See Starr, art. cit. in n. 22, 85.

[29] See Robinson, 'Greek coins acquired by the British Museum, 1938-1948', NC 1948, 59 with Pl. V, 12; A. Shahbazi, 'An Achaemenid Symbol, I' AMI N.F. VII, 1974, 136.

Iran already under Darius II [30]), then there could no longer be any sustained objection to 'showing forth' a yazata also by graven designs. That the practice may indeed go back to the last years of the fifth century is suggested by the tomb-sculptures and coins of some members of the Harpagid dynasty at the time of that king.[31] In the light of these considerations it seems very probable that when a Persian satrap set the heads of Ares or Herakles on his coins he himself saw these as representing Verethraghna, god of Victory, while being content to let them convey a different meaning to his Greek mercenaries and Hellenized subjects. Such usage is clearly attested later in Parthian times.

Several of the coins struck at the Cilician cities of Tarsus and Soli are of interest from the point of view of possible symbiosis. Thus the coin-type of Tiribazus which has the winged circle with Hellenized torso on the reverse has on the obverse a standing type of Baal of Tarsus; and coins were issued at Soli with Baal on the obverse, on the reverse the standard Iranian type of figure in the winged circle, holding a flower.[32] Here there seems to be a deliberate setting together, perhaps in the interests of harmony, of the religious symbols of Iranian rulers and their subjects. There are other coins which may even show, it has been suggested, a measure of religious syncretism. One such coin belongs to a series with a horseman on the obverse, assigned to about 400 B.C.[33] On the reverse it bears 'the figure of a god, standing on the back of a recumbent lion; the god is dressed in the Persian kandys, and holds out a bow in his left hand and a spear (?) in his right hand ... In front there is an Aramaic inscription ...which reads NRGL TRZ'.[34] A second coin of apparently the same series, though less well preserved, has on the obverse a figure usually described as a Persian soldier or king. Here there is no lion beneath his feet; but the Aramaic inscription appears to read LNRGL. 'Another remarkable example ... has an obverse of Pegasus and Bellerophon. which seems purely Greek; but the reverse depicts a standing Nergal in Persian garb with vegetation'.[35]

The cult of Nergal, which flourished in Northern Syria, appears to have been well established in Tarsus; and long before the fourth century B.C. this Akkadian god of death, pestilence and war had become associated first perhaps with the burning summer sun, which in Babylon

[30] See above, p. 201 ff.
[31] See above, p. 207.
[32] For references see Starr, art. cit. in n. 22, Part II, Iran. Ant. XII, 1977, 95 with nn. 80, 82.
[33] See G. K. Jenkins, 'Two coins of Asia Minor', British Museum Quarterly, XXXVI, 1971-1972, nos. 3-4, 97-100; L. Mildenberg, 'Nergal in Tarsos', Antike Kunst, Beiheft 9, 1973, 78-80.
[34] Jenkins, art. cit., 98.
[35] Starr, art. cit. in n. 32, 94 with Pl. XIV c; cf. Mildenberg, art. cit., 79-80 with Taf. 28.5.

could bring sickness and death, and then with the sun more generally. It seems possible, therefore, that his representation here in Persian dress shows an attempt by the Persian satraps of Cilicia to identify this alien god, who possessed a powerful following among their subjects, with their own Mithra, likewise by then a solar divinity of war.[36] If this is so, then there would appear to be a deliberate attempt here at religious syncretism of a sort, in the interests of secular power; but whatever the resulting influence may have been locally on the cult of Nergal, there is nothing to suggest that the concept of this somewhat sinister god of the underworld had any affect on that of Zoroastrian Mithra, the ever-just Ahura, whose associations are with life and the sky above. Whether it contributed anything in due course to the development of the independent faith of Mithraism is a question which lies outside the scope of the present work.[37]

Baal of Tarsus was often accompanied by 'symbols of grapes and corn, recalling the Hittite deity on the rock relief at Ivriz'.[38] There are other coins minted at Tarsus which bear agricultural motifs by themselves. One such has on the obverse the familiar lion-attacking-bull, but on the reverse simply a great ear of corn, with TRZ in Aramaic letters; and another has on the obverse a ploughman in Iranian dress, driving a team of oxen, and on the reverse a cow with her calf, and the winged disk above. The subjects here are characteristically Zoroastrian, with respect being shown for the milch cow, and for the labour of tilling the good earth and bringing forth harvest; and the Iranian elements in the designs perhaps entitle one to look at them in this way, rather than simply as reflecting 'the fertility of the Cilician plain'.[39] The motif of the cow with the calf we have met earlier on the coins of the presumably Zoroastrian Spentōdāta the Harpagid, of Xanthos.[40] That of the ear of corn, it must be admitted, occurs very generally.

Graeco-Persian gems and seals

Many seals and gems in 'Graeco-Persian' style are known, most of them originating probably in Asia Minor; [41] and a number of these

[36] This suggestion I owe to my colleague, Dr. A. D. H. Bivar.
[37] Dr. Bivar himself interprets the link between Mithra and Nergal rather differently, regarding this as considerably older than the late fifth/fourth century B.C.; see his articles 'Religious subjects on Achaemenid seals', Mithraic Studies (ed. J. R. Hinnells) I, 97-101; 'Mithra and Mesopotamia', ibid., II, 275-89; 'Document and symbol in the art of the Achaemenids', Mon. Nyberg I, Acta Iranica 4, 1975, 49-67.
[38] Jenkins, art. cit., 99.
[39] Starr, art. cit., II 92.
[40] See A. Shahbazi, Irano-Lycian Monuments, Pl. XXII, and above, pp. 172-3.
[41] See A. Furtwängler, Die antiken Gemmen III, Leipzig 1900, 117-24; and for subsequent studies the references given by Starr, art. cit., II 67 n. 5.

bear Achaemenian motifs, among them the winged disk. The figure in the winged circle is not attested on any of these objects; and its absence (as representing the royal khvarenah) seems to accord with the assumption that most such seals and gems were commissioned by local officials and by landowners—a rural aristocracy largely composed of Iranian colonists, and of a local gentry which was strongly Iranianized.[42] It was probably the presence of these elements in Asia Minor which helped Zoroastrianism to flourish there long after Alexander's conquest, rather as the country squirearchy in Iran itself maintained the old religion long after the coming of the Arabs.

Gems and seals are also known which appear to have been made for the great satraps of Asia Minor. One of these which shows, it seems, an Achaemenian king venerating 'Anāhita' in the guise of Ishtar has already been considered in an earlier chapter.[43]

The Arebsun inscriptions

Even stronger evidence for the Iranian religious presence in Asia Minor appears to be furnished by the Arebsun inscriptions. In 1895 the Russian scholar Y. I. Smirnov came across in his travels two curious inscribed stones in villagers' houses at Arebsun (ancient Arabissos) in what had formerly been Cappadocia.[44] These stones are now in the Istanbul museum. One is irregular in shape, but the other, it has been suggested,[45] might have been used as a table for offerings. It had apparently lain flat upon the ground, and its top and sides are carved in shallow relief with objects such as fruits, flowers, ears of corn, a bird and a jug with handles. These carvings have been characterized as being in a crude local version of a widespread sub-Hittite style;[46] but they are scattered haphazardly over the surface of the stones, and it has been said that, if they were considered independently of the inscriptions, it would be reasonable to regard them as forgeries.[47] However, none of the scholars who have occupied themselves with the texts has expressed any doubt as to their authenticity, even though the lines are raggedly and awkwardly set.

There are three inscriptions, all in Imperial Aramaic. At first they were

[42] See Starr, art. cit., II, 71.
[43] See above, p. 204 with n. 37.
[44] See M. Lidzbarski, 'Aramäische Inschriften aus Kappadocien', Ephemeris für semitische Epigraphik I, Giessen 1902, 59-74, 319-26; and for subsequent studies H. Donner and W. Röllig, Kanaanische und aramäische Inschriften, 3rd ed., Wiesbaden 1971, III 311 no. 264.
[45] Lidzbarski, op. cit., 62-3.
[46] Ibid., 61, 65.
[47] A verbal communication by Dr. R. D. Barnett, who examined the stones in the Istanbul Museum, and to whom I am indebted for his kind permission to quote him here.

dated on palaeographic grounds to the second century B.C.;[48] but it was subsequently argued that on this evidence they could as well belong to the fourth or even fifth century B.C.[49] The longest and best preserved of them has been translated as follows: 'This (?) Mazda-worshipping Religion (*dynmzdysnš*), queen, sister and wife of Bēl, spoke thus: "I am the wife of Bēl the king." Then Bēl spoke thus to the Mazda-worshipping Religion: "Thou art my sister; very wise and more beautiful than a goddess art thou. For this I have made thee the wife of Bēl".'

There are two other shorter inscriptions, both badly damaged. The first, of one line in length, appears to contain some statement about 'Bēl the great king'. In the second, which has two lines, the name Ahuramazda is clearly legible, written *'whrmzd*, as in the Aramaic version of the Behistun inscription. This text has been read, with restorations, as a fragment of an Avestan prayer, written down in Aramaic script.[50] This would, however, be something very remarkable even in the second century B.C., for evidence suggests that the Zoroastrian priests continued to guard the exclusively oral tradition of the Avesta long after that; and to establish such an early development more would be needed than two lines of heavily restored text, especially since the restorations have produced several otherwise unattested 'Avestan' words.

The Arebsun inscriptions appear nevertheless to provide evidence for the spread of Zoroastrianism among the local population of Cappadocia, with Ahuramazda being accorded both his rightful name and a Semitic 'interpretation' of it as Bēl.[51] The concept of Daēnā, the Religion of Mazda-worship, being joined to the supreme Lord in khvaētvadatha-union is not attested elsewhere in the surviving Zoroastrian literature[52] (where in one place this yazata appears as a 'daughter' rather than a 'sister' of Ahuramazda[53]); but the allegory is clearly in harmony with the sort of imagery used by preachers of the faith.

The Treasure of the Oxus

Coins of some of the fourth-century satraps of Asia Minor have been found to the east of the Achaemenian Empire, and are represented

[48] See Lidzbarski, op. cit., 66.
[49] See H. H. Schaeder, Iranische Beiträge I, 201; F. Rosenthal, Die aramaistische Forschung seit Th. Nöldeke's Veröffentlichungen, Leiden 1939 (repr. 1969), 28-9.
[50] See M. N. Bogoliubov, 'An Old Iranian invocation to Ahura Mazdah from the Aramaic inscriptions of Arebsun', Istoriya Iranskogo Gosudarstva i Kul'turi (ed. V. Gafurov), Moscow 1971, 277-85 (in Russian). (I am indebted to Professor E. J. Bickerman for kindly drawing my attention to this article.)
[51] So F. C. Andreas apud Lidzbarski, op. cit., 68.
[52] Pace Gray, Foundations, 71.
[53] Yt XVII.16.

among the fifteen hundred or so coins associated (many of them doubtfully) with the famous Oxus Treasure.[54] The gold and silver objects which make up this treasure came to light in Afghanistan in 1877, in an area which had once been part of ancient Bactria. After stirring incidents most of them reached the markets of Rawalpindi, where their number was apparently augmented by some ingenious fakes, and where various other objects seem to have become associated with them. Eventually the collection was acquired by the British Museum.

Most objects in it which are regarded as authentic are Persian, of the fifth and fourth centuries B.C.; but two, a gold bowl and dagger-sheath, are thought to be more ancient, possibly even of Median origin; and some were 'Scythic', and testify to Bactria's links with the Iranian steppe-dwellers beyond her northern boundary.[55] The collection contains some remarkable objects, and has been of the greatest interest to archaeologists and art historians, as representing the little-known minor arts of the Achaemenian Empire; but it offers only a few things of specifically religious interest. Among these are two tiny statuettes, both attributed to the sixth century. One, in silver, is of a dignified bearded figure wearing the 'Persian' robe and a crown with diadem, and identified accordingly as an Achaemenian king.[56] He holds before his breast, in his left hand, a short bundle of rods thought to be the baresman.[57] The other statuette is of gold, and represents a man in 'Median' dress with sleeved mantle and a high tiara, the top of which is 'stiffened so as to remain erect'.[58] This figure too is thus presumably that of a king, dressed for battle, journeying or the chase, since to wear the tiara in this fashion was a royal privilege. He also holds what appears to be the short baresman clasped in both hands before his breast.

The long baresman is well represented on objects from the Treasure, since it is carried by several of the figures which appear, embossed in profile, on a number of gold plaques. These figures have already been discussed in connection with the problem of distinguishing priest and nobleman in Achaemenian representations.[59] Apart from these figures, the only other representation with a religious element occurs on a chalcedony cylinder, which shows two battle scenes.[60] In one a Persian king is spearing a single foe, while another lies dead beneath his feet; and facing the king, at head-level, hovers the figure in the winged circle, wearing a crenellated crown and with hand raised in the customary gesture of salutation. In the second scene the king is fighting two enemies over the bodies of two others; and between him and them hovers the winged disk with divine horns. Beneath it, disconnected, appears the familiar figure in a simple circle, facing the same way as the king. Conceivably these double symbols were meant to represent the king's own 'khvarenah' (the figure in the circle) and the 'khvarenah' of the Iranian people (the winged disk), both fighting on his behalf.

[54] See O. M. Dalton, The Treasure of the Oxus.

[55] See R. D. Barnett, 'The art of Bactria and the Treasure of the Oxus', Iran. Ant. VIII, 1968, 34-53.

[56] See Dalton, op. cit., p. 1 no. 1 with Pl. II; Survey I, 352.

[57] On the short and long baresman, and on the use of the baresman by kings and nobles, see above, pp. 38-9 and 147 with n. 101.

[58] Dalton, op. cit., p. 2 no. 2 with Pl. XIII.

[59] See above, pp. 147-8.

Among the very varied contents of the Treasure are numerous rectangular gold plaques, such as those which bear the priest-like figures. These are too big to have been fastened on garments, and have no holes or loops for attachment. It was early suggested, therefore, that they might have had 'a votive significance',[61] and have formed a part of the treasure of a temple[62]. This conjecture appears to have been confirmed by excavations made in the same area by a Soviet-Afghan expedition just over a century later. At Takht-i Sangin, a site on the headwaters of the river Oxus (Amu-Darya), the ruins of a fortress were uncovered, in whose citadel was a building identified as a temple erected in the third century B.C.[63] From the remains of this temple a wealth of votive offerings was recovered; and close resemblances have been traced between some single items and others from the Oxus Treasure, for although most of the Takht-i Sangin finds date from the Hellenistic period, single objects go back to Achaemenian times. These were presumably family heirlooms bestowed on the temple. None of the Takht-i Sangin discoveries so far published bears any motif that can be described as Zoroastrian, and the temple itself is thought to have been built to serve a syncretic cult of Graeco-Bactrian times.

For the student of Zoroastrianism a main part of the interest of the Oxus Treasure itself is that it confirms the assumption that Achaemenian Iran was a broadly unified religious sphere, with the influence of Persian priests and Persian iconography reaching eastern Iranian lands; and it thus testifies visually to the extent of the Zoroastrian community at a

[60] See Dalton, op. cit., 31 n. 114 with Pl. XVI.

[61] See ibid., 19.

[62] On the temple interpretation see further R. Ghirshman, Persia, 244-50; Barnett, art. cit. in n. 55.

[63] See B. A. Litvinsky and I. R. Pichikiyan, 'The Temple of the Oxus', JRAS 1981, 133-67.

time when the surviving sources, both literary and archaeological, tend to focus attention exclusively on Persia and the western satrapies.

Zoroastrianism in the east during the Achaemenian epoch

Zoroastrian tradition suggests that two of the eastern satrapies retained their religious importance throughout the Achaemenian period, despite the dominance of the Medes and Persians. One was Bactria, which never abandoned a tradition that Zoroaster himself had lived and taught there;[64] and the other was Drangiana (modern Seistan), where lies the lake in which, it was believed, the Saošyant will one day be conceived.[65] Bactria, a wealthy and strategically important land, regularly had for its satrap a son of the Great King, or a prince of the royal blood; and this may help to account for the founding there of one of the Anāhita temples of Artaxerxes II, and also for the acceptance of Zurvanism in those eastern regions (attested for Bactria's neighbour, Sogdia).[66] The Khorasan Highway, now maintained as part of the famous Achaemenian system of 'royal roads', had of old linked Bactria with western Iran and Mesopotamia; and official business, trade, and the passage of soldiers to and fro (both to serve in the Great King's armies in the west, and to fight in unchronicled eastern campaigns) would have kept it busy at this period; and as groups of laymen moved along it, they must often have been accompanied by their priests. Some, no doubt, such as the family priests of princes and generals, were men of high intelligence and learning; and either through such intermediaries, or through the independent journeyings of scholar-priests in quest of knowledge, the intellectual discoveries of Babylonia reached eastern Iran and India.[67]

Pilgrimage as a unifying factor

Pilgrims probably also helped to throng the Khorasan Highway in spring and autumn, travelling to visit holy places in the more ancient lands of the faith (for it was not, it seems, until the Hellenistic period, after the Zoroastrian community had been sundered by 'the brutal sword of Alexander',[68] and the King's peace was gone, that Median magi created the legend that it was they who possessed the lands once

[64] For references see A. V. W. Jackson, Zoroaster, index s.v. Bactria.
[65] See HZ I 274, 276.
[66] See above, p. 240 with n. 141.
[67] See above, p. 241 with n. 143.
[68] Starr, art. cit. in n. 32, 108.

sanctified by the presence of their prophet[69]). One of the chief places of pilgrimage is likely to have been 'Lake Kayānsih' (the modern Hāmun Lake), since the literary sources suggest how strongly the coming of the World-Saviour was dwelt upon at that time. Pilgrims from Media would naturally have travelled there by the Khorasan Highway, passing through holy Raga (which may well have been a first stage for their devotions), and then, having reached the satrapy of Parthava in the north-east, turning south along another great road to Drangiana; but Persian pilgrims may well have taken the southern route through Kerman and the forests to the east of it, thus beginning to forge the special religious ties between Persia and Drangiana which are apparent from the Pahlavi books. Other Zoroastrians probably came from yet further east—Arachosia and Gandara and the Indus plain; and as at the holy places of any great faith, there are likely to have been large seasonal gatherings, with a commingling of peoples of very diverse callings and outlooks, joined for a common devotional purpose.

Zoroastrianism in India

North-west India itself had been part of the Persian Empire since the conquests of Cyrus and Darius, and had been fully integrated into its organisation, using Imperial Aramaic as its written chancellery language, and regularly sending its officials, its tribute-bearers and its soldiers to the west. Achaemenian palaces have been excavated at Taxila, the capital of the 'Hindu' satrapy, but so far no traces of religious buildings of this period have been found. Nor is there any strong likelihood that there will be, for there is no reason to suppose that Zoroastrian temples were built in the fourth century in this non-Zoroastrian land, where there was no local tradition of any image-cult to make such a development easy and natural; and 'places of rites', such as must have existed for the Zoroastrian priests of Taxila, and of every other sizeable Persian community in the Indian satrapies, are not likely to have left identifiable remains.

There are faint literary traces, however, of what seems to have been considerable influence by Zoroastrianism in India at this epoch. It was after the downfall of the empire that Alexander sent Megasthenes as ambassador to the court of Pāṭaliputra (modern Patna), far to the east of the Indus valley; and Strabo has preserved a report which he made on the beliefs of certain Brahmans whom he questioned, which contains

[69] See Boyce, Zoroastrians, 79, 93.

some interesting features. Among the Indian 'philosophers', he wrote, 'the Brahmans have the greatest prestige, since they have a more consistent dogmatic system ... Their teaching about Nature is in parts naive ... In many points however their teaching agrees with that of the Greeks —for instance, that the world has a beginning and an end in time, and that its shape is spherical; that the Deity ... is its Governor and Maker ... About generation and the soul their teaching shows parallels to the Greek doctrines, and on many other matters. Like Plato too, they interweave fables, about the immortality of the soul and the judgments inflicted in the other world, and so on'.[70] This account of Brahman doctrine 'does not completely agree either with the picture drawn in Indian literary sources or with present-day practice';[71] and it seems likely that the above points, in which the Brahman teachings seemed familiar to Megasthenes, shared with Greek thought a common influence, that of Zoroastrianism, reaching out in both cases beyond the limits of Iranian rule. But whereas in some areas Zoroastrian teachings were fundamentally congenial to the religious thoughts and temperament of the peoples who encountered them—most notably the Jews—and so had an abiding influence, this was not so in India; and only the report by Megasthenes sheds light on what seems to have been a temporary but considerable transformation of Brahmanical teachings in northern India under the influence of the Iranian faith, a transformation which probably did not long outlast the withdrawal of Iran's political presence. (A parallel can be seen in the similarly transitory but quite profound influence of Christianity on certain schools of Hinduism during the period of British rule in India.) The existence at all of such influence is a valuable further testimony to the presence of learned Zoroastrian priests in the Indian satrapies, able and willing to discourse upon the doctrines of their faith.

Aristotle and Iran

Meantime in the better-documented west Plato had died, in 348/47. Aristotle, who had been twenty years his pupil, had learnt at the Academy a real respect for the Orient, and its 'ancient and tremendous' intellectual achievements;[72] and when, after his great teacher's death, he wrote his dialogue On Philosophy, he began it with a survey of ancient philosophies, not through a merely antiquarian interest, but to establish

[70] Strabo XV.716 (Megasthenes, Frg. 42).
[71] E. R. Bevan, Cambridge History of India Vol. I (ed. E. R. Rapson), Cambridge 1935, 420.
[72] Jaeger, Aristotle, 128.

(in accordance with the theory of ever-recurring phenomena) that the same truths reappear in human history indefinitely often.[73] 'He penetrated to the earliest times—if we follow his own chronology—and spoke of the Magi and their teachings. Then came the venerable representatives of the oldest Hellenic wisdom, the theologians, as he calls them, then the doctrines of the Orphics ...'.[74] Unfortunately all that survives of his words about the magi is the following brief citation by Diogenes Laertius: 'Aristotle in the first book of his work On Philosophy says that the Magi are more ancient even than the Egyptians, and that according to them there are two first principles, a good spirit and an evil spirit, one called Zeus and Oromasdes, the other Hades and Areimanius'.[75]

It would clearly be impossible, even if more survived of On Philosophy, to determine the contribution of Zoroastrian doctrines to Aristotle's own thought; but on two major points there is congruence. One is that Aristotle in his theology made a sharp distinction between transcendent God and the lesser star-gods, 'which was something entirely new and of epoch-making significance for Hellenistic philosophy'.[76] The other is that he imputed terrible atheism to philosophers who declared that the world would have an end. 'Why' (he is said to have asked) 'should God destroy the world? ... If the new world is like the old, its artificer will have laboured in vain, differing in nothing from mere children, who often, when they make sand-castles on the shore, build them up and then pull them down'.[77] Zoroaster's doctrine was that this world, the good creation of Ahuramazda, will endure, purged of all evil, and that it is only troubled human history that will cease, yielding place on the redeemed earth to an eternal, static perfection—God's kingdom to come. But he believed that the world was created by God, whereas Aristotle insisted that it is ungenerated as well as imperishable.[78]

When Plato died and another scholar became head of the Academy, Aristotle withdrew and went to teach for three years at Assos in the Troad, at a philosophical school set up by Hermias, tyrant of Atarneus. Hermias (whose niece he married) was a remarkable man of humble origin, whose master had sent him to study with Plato. On his return to Asia Minor he succeeded to his master's position, and obtained Persian recognition and permission to style himself prince; and he then proceeded

[73] Ibid., 129-30.
[74] Ibid., 128-9.
[75] The Works of Aristotle transl. into English, ed. D. Ross, Vol. XII, Select Fragments, Oxford 1952, 79, Frg. 6 (Diogenes Laertius, Proem. I 8(6)).
[76] Jaeger, op. cit., 156 n. 1.
[77] Select Fragments, 92, Frg. 19.
[78] Ibid., 88, Frg. 18; cf. Jaeger, op. cit., 139-40.

greatly to extend his territory and wealth. Meantime Philip of Macedon, by a blend of fighting, ruthlessness, bribes and diplomacy, was establishing his supremacy over the Greek states; and in 346, under his aegis, yet another general peace was declared among them—'a new King's Peace; but the king was a Greek, and not a Persian'.[79] Two years later Macedonia and Persia concluded a pact of friendship and non-aggression.

In Athens, however, the rhetorician Isocrates was urging Philip to undertake the conquest of Asia Minor at the head of a Greek confederacy, and so obtain new lands for Greeks to settle in, a cause which he had been advocating for several decades; and by 342, it is thought, Philip was already contemplating such an enterprise, since 'only this could justify the brute force by which the king of Macedon was ruling over the free Greek cities'.[80] In that year Aristotle (who had links with the Macedonian court through his father, formerly personal physician to the father of King Philip) went to be tutor to Philip's son Alexander. It is thought that he was probably engaged also in diplomatic activities, since 'merely to play the part of private tutor would not have suited his virile character'; [81] and that, in undertaking to form the ideas of the heir to the leading Hellenic state, he may have been influenced by that experienced statesman Hermias. The region which Hermias himself ruled was the gateway to Asia Minor; and Philip had already entered into negotiations with him, seeking to obtain a bridgehead, which Hermias appears willing to have granted him. Aristotle himself would clearly have favoured such a plan, for whatever his respect for the sages of the Orient, it was a matter of faith with him that Greece, if politically united, could and should rule the world.[82] But Persia was not prepared to relinquish her own role, and when Hermias' activities became known, Artaxerxes III had him put to death.

Artaxerxes III's inscriptions and tomb

Artaxerxes III was energetic not only in war and politics. At Susa he completed the restoration of the palace of Darius, begun by his father; and after the long cessation of building at Persepolis since the time of his great-grandfather, Artaxerxes I, he 'expressed attachment to the dynastic capital of his ancestors by adding his own residential palace to their structures',[83] and by completing or replacing the western stairway of the

[79] Bengtson, Greeks and Persians, 292.
[80] Jaeger, Aristotle, 119.
[81] Ibid.
[82] See ibid., 121.
[83] Schmidt, Persepolis I, 43.

palace of Darius the Great.[84] Four identical inscriptions on these structures end with the words: 'May Ahuramazda and Mithra (and) the Baga protect me, and this country, and what was built by me'.[85]

What is striking here is the use, so late in the Achaemenian period, of the ancient *dvandva*, Mithra-Baga, to invoke the two lesser Ahuras. We have earlier met this compound, parallel in meaning to Avestan Mithra-Ahura berezanta and to Vedic Mitrāvaruṇā,[86] in the Elamite tablets from Persepolis, where too it is used with the name Ahuramazda to refer to the great Ahuric triad.[87] We have also seen this triad being replaced in the inscriptions of Artaxerxes II by the new one of Ahuramazda, Anāhita and Mithra [88]; and it is an interesting question, whether Artaxerxes III revived the archaic form of invocation purely out of devotion to Varuna, or partly for pragmatic reasons, thus seeking perhaps to end religious dissensions which he had seen troubling the Zoroastrian community during his father's reign. Whatever the true explanation, his repeated invocations show that Varuna's eclipse was a slow process; and it was never to become total.

The tomb which is assigned to Artaxerxes III was made, like that of his father, in the Royal Hill behind the Persepolis Terrace.[89] To create a vertical rock-face for it the masons cut a deep trench across the slope of the hill; and on the Terrace side of this trench they built a platform, from which one could look across it to the tomb. On the platform there was a mud-brick building, where probably regular rites for the King's departed soul were performed, such as were still being solemnized then at the tomb of Cyrus.

The iconography of Artaxerxes III's tomb, in all its main features, is exactly like that of the previous tombs of kings of his line; but among the small variations in detail is the decoration of the frame of its doorway, which consists of three rows of the twelve-petalled rosettes, symbols probably of immortality, which had been so much used in the Persepolis carvings. The really unusual feature of the tomb, however, is that it had only a single vault, containing two cists, one smaller than the other, presumably for the King himself and his Queen of queens. The characteristic triplicity of all the other tombs was thus abandoned.

[84] See ibid., 228 f.
[85] A³Pa 24-6 (Kent, Old Persian, 156).
[86] See HZ I 32, 49.
[87] See above, p. 139.
[88] See above, p. 217. Artaxerxes II also invokes Mithra alone, but never 'the Baga', see p. 219.
[89] See Schmidt, op. cit., III, 102-7 with Pls 70-5.

Artaxerxes III's death

In the very year, 338, in which Philip of Macedon finally brought to an end the independence of the Greek states by the battle of Charoneia, and so paved the way for attack on Persia, Artaxerxes III was poisoned by his trusted commander-in-chief, the eunuch Bagoas. By this murder, it has been said, Bagoas destroyed the Persian Empire.[90]

[90] Olmstead, Persian Empire, 489.

CHAPTER FIFTEEN

DARIUS III (336-331 B.C.)

Arses and the Corinthian League

The murdered Artaxerxes III was succeeded by Arses, his son by his Queen of queens, Atossa (whose name, piously Zoroastrian, had recurred among Achaemenian princesses since the time of Cyrus). Egypt revolted at the news of his father's death; and in the same year the Greek states founded the Corinthian League with Philip of Macedon as its 'protector', and proclaimed war on Persia. The ostensible cause was to avenge the destruction of Greek shrines by Xerxes almost one hundred and fifty years earlier—a good rallying ground for the deeply divided Hellenes. A Macedonian army crossed at once into Asia Minor, and was welcomed there by some of the Greek cities.

The accessions of Darius III and Alexander

Before Arses could act on either front, he tried to rid himself of the dominating Bagoas, only to be poisoned by him like his father. Bagoas is said to have had all Arses' children put to death; and there seems to have been a general slaughter of other princes of the blood over the years, for the king-making eunuch (who as commander-in-chief evidently had the loyalty of Persian troops) now set on the throne Darius III, a great-great-nephew of Artaxerxes II. Darius was then a man of forty-five, with some experience of rule as satrap of Armenia; but he can have had no training for governing the empire, and no expectation of the crown. He early proved to be of some mettle, however, for when Bagoas, finding him intractable, tried to poison him in his turn, he is said to have forced the eunuch to swallow the deadly drink himself.[1]

A few months later Philip of Macedon was murdered, and his son Alexander, then just twenty, succeeded him, though not without a struggle. He recalled the Macedonian army (which had already suffered a defeat) from Asia Minor, and harshly quelled the unrest which had broken out among his Greek 'allies'. The first city to revolt from Macedonian domination, Thebes, was stormed by his troops, its houses razed, and its surviving inhabitants all sold into slavery. This has been judged

[1] For references see Olmstead, Persian Empire, 490 n. 19.

to be 'a piece of brutal power-politics. Alexander, impatient to begin war on Persia, meant to break the spirit of resistance in Hellas to protect his master plan'.[2] Such an act, committed by Hellenes against Hellenes, augured ill for the 'barbarian' peoples of Asia, against whom the young king meant to lead his forces in a campaign which had two acknowledged goals—vengeance and the acquisition of wealth.

Alexander's early campaigns

In 334, when Darius III had just succeeded in subduing Egypt yet again, Alexander launched for a second time an attack on Asia Minor, nominally as an undertaking of the Corinthian League. The Persian rulers of the western satrapies met him with their combined forces at Granicus, and after a hard-fought battle suffered disastrous defeat. 'The long list of the Persian dead—the generals Niphates and Petines, the satraps Spithridates and Mithrobarzanes, the nobles Arbupales, Mithridates, and Pharnaces (the son, son-in-law, and brother-in-law of Darius, respectively), and Omares, leader of the native mercenaries—showed how Persians could yet sacrifice themselves for their king'.[4] By this signal victory the Greeks, who had provided much-sought-after mercenaries throughout the Near East for generations, enhanced their already formidable reputation as fighters; and this became an additional weapon in the arsenal so skilfully disposed of by Alexander.

The battle of Issus

After the battle Alexander installed a Macedonian officer as satrap of Hellespontine Phrygia, a sign that he meant to remain and rule in Asia Minor, as successor to the Great King.[5] In the following months he made himself master of much of that land; and late the following year he crossed the Taurus, and entered the North Syrian plain. There at last Darius met him at Issus, with a huge army gathered from the eastern and western lands of the empire. Curtius Rufus, who in the mid first century A.C. compiled a 'History of Alexander' from older sources, describes how the Persian army was led out on that fateful day.[6] Following their usual custom, he says, they did not make a start until the sun

[2] Bengtson, Greeks and Persians, 306-7.
[3] See Olmstead, op. cit., 491-3.
[4] Olmstead, op. cit., 497.
[5] See Bengtson, op. cit., 308.
[6] Curtius Rufus, History of Alexander, III.8 ff. (Clemen, Fontes, 38; Nachrichten, 148 ff.; F.-P. 41).

had risen (and presumably the dawn prayers had been said).[7] Then 'the signal was given by a trumpet-blast from the king's tent; and above the tent, visible to all, shone a representation of the sun, enclosed in crystal'. This was presumably a symbol of Mithra, lord of the sun and of just battles—and naturally all battles fought by Iranians against 'anarya', non-Iranian peoples, could be held to be just. The order of march Curtius describes as follows: 'The fire, which the Persians call sacred and eternal, was carried in front upon a silver altar, followed immediately by magi singing a national hymn.' This is the first time that fire is said to have been carried before a Persian army; and although Zoroastrians regarded fire in general as 'sacred and eternal', these epithets, and the particular occasion, make it very probable that the fire in question was kindled with embers from a temple fire, a **verethraghan- ātar-*, carried forth thus as a palladium. This custom, known also in Sasanian times, had presumably evolved in the fourth century—unless this was indeed the unhappy moment of its innovation.

Behind the magi, Curtius relates, came 365 young men in purple cloaks, equalling, he says, the number of the days of the year, 'for the Persians also divide the year into 365 days'. This (set against the statements of Herodotus and Plutarch, and the evidence of the Zoroastrian calendar) appears to be an anachronism, with the number '360' of his older sources altered to suit what he knew of the facts of his own day. Purple was a warrior-colour, and these youths were evidently fighting men, following the 'Victorious Fire'. 'Behind them' (Curtius continues) 'came the chariot dedicated to Jupiter, drawn by white horses; and next a horse of remarkable size, which they called the horse of the Sun. The riders of these horses carried golden rods and wore white uniforms'—the colour for priests, and for holy things. The single ceremonial chariot, dedicated to Ahuramazda, takes us back to the time of Xerxes and beyond; but it seems that, now that images of yazatas were permitted, it had become lavishly embellished with them, although itself remaining empty as tradition required. 'Each side of the chariot was adorned with representations of the gods, moulded in gold and silver; the yoke was conspicuous for the jewels which glistened upon it, while from it rose, to a cubit's height, two statuettes of ancestors, representing Ninius and Bel respectively. Between these they had consecrated a golden eagle with wings outstretched'. A golden eagle (or falcon) was an emblem regularly borne before a Persian army, and it has been seen—rightly or not—as a symbol of Verethraghna. (The falcon is one of his manifestations, but it

[7] Cf. Xenophon on Cyrus, above, p. 214.

can also be an embodiment of Khvarenah,[8] or simply a symbol of swiftness and power.) The curious description of the two statuettes has so far baffled attempts at interpretation. It is striking that at this dangerous hour it is the two Ahuras, Ahuramazda and Mithra—traditional guardians of right and order—who are chiefly invoked to be present, with chariot and steed prepared for them. There is no chariot for Anāhita, such as Xenophon seems to have seen with the army of the younger Cyrus. Conceivably this was to avoid vexing the eastern Iranian priests, and for the better unity of the great army.

Despite this pious marching forth, the battle of Issus ended in utter defeat for the Persians. Darius fled the field, and there was heavy slaughter as the ranks broke after him. The Persian camp was taken by the enemy, and Darius' own family—his mother, sister-queen, and three children—became captives of Alexander, who treated them chivalrously; but most other prisoners would have been enslaved or slain (as the Persians had slain all in the Greek camp, which they had overrun before the battle). Among the victims there must inevitably have been many priests—not only the magi who had followed the sacred fire, but the priests who would have accompanied each Iranian contingent to sacrifice and pray for them, and, if necessary and possible, to perform the last rites. And since it was the custom for each great man to be accompanied on campaign by members of his household, the Persian high priest himself may well have perished—the Ostanes of his day—with other leading members of the priestly hierarchy.

The battle of Gaugamela

After Issus Alexander occupied Syria and marched south. Tyre and Gaza put up a fierce resistance in his path and were pitilessly reduced; but Egypt (whose satrap had fallen at Issus) easily passed into the possession of a new conqueror. Overtures for peace from Darius (with offers of heavy concessions) were rejected; and in 331, returning north, Alexander crossed the Tigris and met the Persian king a second time at Gaugamela. Before the battle, Curtius Rufus relates, Darius, with his generals and members of the royal family, 'went round the lines, as the columns stood to arms, and called upon the sun and Mithra and the sacred and eternal fire to inspire them with a courage worthy of their former triumphs and of the great deeds of their ancestors'.[9] Among the Persian commanders were nobles bearing honoured names, long known in

[8] Cf. Yt XIV.91, and above, p. 104.
[9] Op. cit., IV.13.12, cf. 14.24.

famous families;[10] and in the ensuing battle they fought as bravely as their forefathers. But Darius III was no strategist, his great army was clumsily deployed, and under Alexander's direct onslaught the king's courage failed again and he fled as at Issus, leaving the Macedonian not only master of a bloody field but virtually already possessed of the Persian Empire.

The end of the first phase of conquest

From Gaugamela Alexander marched south to take possession of Babylon. Resistance was useless and the city surrendered. A procession of nobles and priests came out to meet the conqueror; and since it was a great city of the Persian Empire which was thus opening its gates, Zoroastrian priests led their part of the procession.[11] As Curtius Rufus relates: 'Next came magi, singing a hymn, according to their practice. They were followed by soothsayers, and also by instrumentalists playing their national lyre. The latter were Babylonians, whose custom it is to sing the praises of the kings; the former Chaldeans, who point out the motions of the heavenly bodies and the appointed changes of the seasons'.[12] No bloodshed is reported in Babylon, where Alexander sought to please the native population by ordering the rebuilding of the temple of Marduk, which had lain in ruins since its destruction by Xerxes;[13] and the evidence of later times (which suggests sustained contact between the magi of Persia and Babylon) makes it likely that Persian colonists and their priests continued to live and work and worship there under Alexander and his successors.

The massacre at Persepolis

From Babylon Alexander marched on Susa, which likewise capitulated, yielding him vast treasure; and from there eastward toward Persepolis. He outflanked the Persian satrap who tried to block his way, and the commander of the city thereupon surrendered it to him, early in 330. And it was here, it seems, that Alexander sought dramatically to fulfil the avowed purpose of the war undertaken by the Corinthian League, whose general he nominally was. He exacted vengeance, that is, for Xerxes' acts of destruction in Greece by himself starting a conflagration that consumed all the splendid palaces on the great Terrace, with their vast gilded wooden roofs. He had all the Persian captives who were with

[10] See Olmstead, op. cit., 515-6.
[11] This point was stressed by Bidez-Cumont, Mages, I 34-5.
[12] Op. cit., V.1.22.
[13] Arrian, Anabasis, III.16.3.

him put to death; and he gave over the city on the plain beneath to his troops to plunder. Persepolis was said to be then the richest city under the sun; and it was ruthlessly pillaged, house by house, and all its male inhabitants were killed and the women enslaved.[14] Among those who died in that wholesale massacre there must have been many priests: priests who prayed at the royal tombs and performed rites such as those named in the Elamite tablets; priests who tended the royal fire or fires within the palace precincts, and others who served at the Frātadāra temple; and priests who ministered to the individual needs of the many courtiers and citizens. It is very likely that there was also a college of learned priests at Persepolis, which despite the importance of the magi of Babylon was probably a leading centre of Persian Zoroastrianism. Many 'scribes' must also have perished then, men of priestly family who worked in the chancellery offices.

It is by the butchery at Persepolis—an undefended town which had surrendered without a blow, confident of clemency—that Alexander is likely to have earned the standing title given him in Zoroastrian tradition of 'the Accursed' (*guzastag*), a title which he shares with Anra Mainyu, whose instrument in the eyes of the faithful he clearly was. He is also bitterly accused down the centuries of being the 'murderer of priests;'[15] but many other incidents are likely to have contributed to giving him this reputation, in eastern as well as western Iran, since all acts of his commanders and battle-hardened troops, greedy for plunder and contemptuous of the 'barbarian', were naturally laid at the door of the man who led them on their course of conquest. He is further said, in a late Pahlavi passage, to have 'quenched many fires';[16] but although this may well have been true (as incidental to the pillaging of temples), in the text in question this sin has probably been transferred to him from the later Muslim conquerors of Iran, whose coming was a second and parallel disaster for Zoroastrianism.

Alexander at Pasargadae

From ruined Persepolis Alexander went north to Pasargadae and added its treasures to his already huge plunder. There he had the tomb of Cyrus opened so that he might enter it, but treated it otherwise with respect.[17] The incident must nevertheless have been profoundly

[14] Diodorus Siculus, XVII.70; for further references see Olmstead, op. cit., 520 n. 17.
[15] E.g. Ardā Virāz Nāmag, I.9; and cf. the Sogdian fragment cited by W. B. Henning, 'The murder of the magi', JRAS 1944, 138/141.
[16] GBd. XXXIII.14.
[17] For the account of what he is said to have seen, see above, p. 70.

perturbing to its priestly guardians—that an unclean 'anarya' should force his way into the long inviolate sepulchre, and emerge from it unscathed but still more unclean from the inescapable pollutions of a corpse. Many additional prayers must have been said by them thereafter, to purify and reconsecrate the area round about for Cyrus' visiting soul.

Alexander's eastward march and the death of Darius III

Alexander meantime pressed on northward to Ecbatana. Darius III had taken refuge in the ancient Deiocid capital, from which he fled as Alexander approached. There in the shadow of its great palaces the conqueror, having fulfilled the war-aim of the Corinthian League, disbanded his Greek troops, re-enlisting those who wished as mercenaries in his own pay. From then on he campaigned openly in his own name and interest. He marched eastward along the Khorasan Highway, through 'Zoroastrian' Raga (of whose fate little is said) and on into the satrapy of Parthava. There the corpse of Darius was delivered to him, the fugitive king having in the end been slain by one of his own satraps, Bessus of Bactria. Alexander, a king himself and mindful of the dignity of kingship, had the body taken back to Persepolis and interred with royal honours, presumably in the tomb of one of Darius' predecessors. (The royal tombs had not yet been plundered.[18])

Zoroastrianism and the Macedonian conquest

Iranian resistance did not end with Darius' death, and five years of campaigning still lay before the Macedonian, with some bitter fighting, especially in Bactria—fighting which meant continued slaughter. But Persian rule was over, and Alexander could already claim the throne of the Great Kings by right of conquest, as long before him Cyrus had thus

[18] An unfinished tomb with associated terrace in a low spur of the Kuh-i Mihr (Kuh-i Rahmat), a little to the south of the Terrace of Persepolis, was once regarded as having been begun for Darius III, see Schmidt, Persepolis III, 107 with Pls 76-9; but it has now been established that details of its workmanship indicate an earlier date, and it is suggested that it may have been begun for Artaxerxes II, and then abandoned for the site behind the Terrace because faults running across the rock-face affected the facade. See W. Kleiss and P. Calmeyer, 'Das unvollendete Felsgrab bei Persepolis', AMI VIII, 1975, 81-98.—Scattered through the mountains of western Iran there are a number of isolated rock-cut tombs with no identifying inscriptions, and in most cases no carvings of a kind to make it possible to date them. (For a list, with bibliography, see P. Calmeyer, AMI XI, 1978, 73 ff.) Some were evidently ossuaries like the *astōdāna* of Artimas at Limyra, others contained larger cists, or were simply plain chamber-vaults. Originally some were regarded, because of their location, as Median tombs of the pre-Achaemenian period; but now it is held that all are probably later than Darius the Great, being imitations (by local princes, nobles or high priests) of the rock-cut sepulchres of the kings of his line. Details of facade-carvings allow some to be assigned in all probability to the Hellenistic period; and so, although others may well be Achaemenian, all these nameless tombs will be treated together, for clarity's sake, in the next volume of this history.

claimed the throne of Babylon, and Cambyses the pharaohs' crown in Egypt.

For Zoroastrianism the Macedonian conquest was to be less crushing than that of the Arabs, nearly a thousand years later. The Hellenes were not able to subject Iran for long; and they had no hostility to the Iranian faith, nor desire to replace it by beliefs of their own. Its results appear nevertheless to have been profoundly damaging to the transmission of the ancient Avestan texts, many of which, it seems, were lost for ever with the widespread slaughter of priests, who were the living books of the faith, or were only partially remembered (it is said in one text by the women and children of priestly families [19]); for violent death and suffering did not cease for the Zoroastrian community with Alexander's own relatively swift campaigns of conquest. While he was fighting in the east, some of those whom he had left behind to rule in the western satrapies began to plunder and kill on their own behalf, doubtful of his return; and after his untimely death there followed the bitter and protracted fighting of the Successors' Wars; but all this, and its effects on the faith, must remain matter for the succeeding volume of this history.

[19] See the Pahlavi text, 'Wonders of Sagestān', Pahlavi Texts, ed. J. M. Jamasp-Asana, Bombay 1913, 26.6-17; partly transl. by H. W. Bailey, Zor. Problems, 161.

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